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**The Iconography of Late Anglo-Saxon Kingship
Representations of Kings Æthelstan, Edgar, and Cnut
in Three Illuminated Manuscripts**

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*To the memory
of my beloved maternal grandfather*

Παρασκευά Παπαδόπουλου

With great love to my husband Hamish Fraser and our son Konstantinos

I DECLARE THAT THIS THESIS IS MY OWN WORK, AND THAT IT HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED FOR ANY OTHER DEGREE OR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION.

CHARIKLEIA KONSTANTINA FRASER

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the iconography of Anglo-Saxon kingship through analysis of three late Anglo-Saxon prefatory manuscript illuminations. The compositions of these pictures are considered in detail and reinterpreted with reference to theological ideas of the period. The miniatures depict King Æthelstan holding an open book, King Edgar a closed book and King Cnut holding onto a cross. The crowned kings are depicted standing respectfully before sacred and divine authorities.

Comparison of the prefatory miniatures in question with analogous compositions in Anglo-Saxon, Carolingian and Ottonian manuscript illumination reveals a variety of visual sources used to suggest ecclesiastical and divine sanction for the monarchs and their policies.

An assessment of medieval textual sources is used to aid interpretation and understanding of the iconography associated with later Anglo-Saxon kingship. Historical and political issues are fully taken into consideration, an assessment of the propagandistic aspects of the iconography forming an important aspect of this.

In evaluating the iconography of the Anglo-Saxon monarchy, the thesis focuses on the following themes: intercession and liturgical commemoration; coronation ceremonies; the interaction of monarchy with the Church; the use of biblical texts as a model for the practice of kingship, the relevance of increased literacy for safeguarding the upholding of good government; the tradition of donations to the Church.

The thesis argues that the presence of the patron saints of the monastic foundations standing next to the Anglo-Saxon kings suggests scenes of

intercession with strong overtones of salvation. The iconography of the three prefatory miniatures does not only record actual events of presentation, but manifests the spirituality, real or implied, of Anglo-Saxon monarchs in order to suggest the anointed king's exclusive relationship with God, assuring him of God's sanction and the salvation of his soul.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASC (A, B, etc)	The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (MSS. A, B, etc.)
ASE	<i>Anglo-Saxon England</i>
BL	London, British Library
BNJ	<i>British Numismatic Journal</i>
CSASE	Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England
CCCC	Corpus Christi College Cambridge
CMD	<i>Chronica Monasterii Dunelmensis</i>
DNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
EEMF	Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile
EETS	Early English Text Society
EETS, ES	Extra Series
EETS, SS	Supplementary Series
EETS, OS	Original Series
EHD	<i>English Historical Documents</i>
HER	<i>English Historical Review</i>
FS	<i>Frühmittelalterliche Studien</i>
<i>Gesta Pontificum</i>	<i>Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi de gestis pontificum</i> <i>Anglorum libri quinque</i>
<i>Gesta Regum</i>	<i>Willelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi de gestis regum</i> <i>Anglorum libri quinque</i>

HE	Bede, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i> , ed. C. Plummer.
HSC	<i>Historia de Sancto Cuthberto</i>
Jnl	journal
LDE	<i>Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu Istius, Hoc est Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie: Tract on the Origins and Progress of this the Church of Durham</i>
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
OE	Old English
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
RC	<i>Regularis Concordia</i>
RS	Rolls Series (Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland)
S	P. H. Sawyer, ed., <i>Anglo-Saxon Charters: an annotated List and Bibliography</i> (Royal Historical Society, London, 1968)
VEdR	<i>Vita Edwardi Regis</i>
<i>Vita Wulfstani</i>	<i>The Vita Wulfstani of William of Malmesbury</i>

INTRODUCTION

The original context study of three late-Anglo-Saxon prefatory miniatures examines the iconography of the Anglo-Saxon monarchy in relation to the theological ideas of the time and questions the way the compositions have been understood and interpreted. The prefatory miniatures depict three crowned Anglo-Saxon kings presenting themselves respectfully before sacred and divine authorities (figs. 1, 4, 7).

This thesis suggests that these three Anglo-Saxon royal images of Æthelstan, Edgar and Cnut present an idiosyncratic iconography closely related to the theme of intercession and the Christian doctrine of salvation.

The full-page painted prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, probably written in the south of England c.934-9 (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library, MS 183, fol. 1v) depicts a crowned king and a haloed saint standing close together (fig. 1). The crowned king stands beneath an arch, holding an open book in his hands while the haloed saint stands before a church or chapel, holding a small closed book in his left hand with his right hand raised, probably in greeting or blessing. The miniature has a rich foliage frame, inhabited with birds and a lion, divided into eight panels.

In the full-page painted prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter, written in Winchester, 966 (BL, MS Cotton Vespasian A. viii, fol. 2v) a crowned king, with his back to us and arms raised, is depicted in the process of bowing flamboyantly to the Lord in Majesty, who appears above in a golden mandorla

held by four angels (fig. 4).¹ Looking up to the Lord with a small closed book in his left hand the king is flanked by two haloed saints, presumably the Virgin Mary and St Peter. The miniature has a lavishly foliated frame, and the composition is painted on purple vellum with gold, blue, red green, pale brown and purple as predominant colours.

The full page prefatory miniature of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey Register or *Liber Vitae*, written in Winchester, c. 1031 (BL, Stowe MS 944, fol. 6r) is a partly coloured line-drawing with a plain frame (fig. 7). In the miniature King Cnut and Queen Ælfgifu, identified by inscriptions, flank a large gold cross, placed on a draped altar. The royal couple is attended by two flying angels, who hold a crown over the king's head and a veil over the queen's. King Cnut holds the cross with his right hand and his sword with the left. At the top of the composition, Christ in Majesty, in a mandorla, holding an open book, is flanked by the Virgin Mary and St Peter, the patrons of the New Minster. The scene is watched by a group of tonsured figures, presumably monks, shown in their stalls under the arcades of a church at the bottom of the picture. The frame of the miniature is made of two simple lines in red and green. The same colours are repeated in the inscriptions, which are red with green initials.

The strongest characteristic in the three prefatory miniatures is the depiction of the crowned king in respectful attendance before the patrons of the monastic foundations and divine authorities, separated from the congregation.

¹ For a discussion on the posture of King Edgar see chapter 2 of the thesis See also William Noel, 'The Utrecht Psalter in England: Continuity and Experiment', in *The Utrecht Psalter in Medieval Art: Picturing the Psalms of David*, eds., Koert van der Horst, William Noel, Wilhelmina C. M. Wüstefeld, (Utrecht, 1996), pp. 145-146.

However, the miniatures also present certain differences. The *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* and the New Minster Charter manuscripts feature only a single painted, lavishly framed, prefatory miniature, with no inscriptions to identify the crowned king with the book. By contrast, the New Minster *Liber Vitae* prefatory miniature is a partly coloured line-drawing, with a simple frame, followed by two full-page line drawings depicting scenes of the *Last Judgement* (fols. 6v-7r) (figs. 8-15).² Moreover, here the royal couple is identified by inscriptions, and the king, instead of a book, holds onto a cross.

Manuscripts

The *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* manuscript (292 x 197 mm) presents a well organised selection of texts about St Cuthbert: first, Bede's Prose and Metrical Life of the Saint and, secondly, a liturgical office. Between the two lives are inserted papal and episcopal lists on fols. 59-64, a list of kings, lists of Anglo-Saxon dioceses and kingdoms, and royal genealogies. The manuscript (96 folios) is written in Latin, in insular minuscule script (Anglo-Saxon square minuscule), on well prepared parchment. The single column text (212 x 122 mm) has twenty-six lines to a page, ruled in hard point.³ The numerals of the chapters are in red and mostly placed in the centre of the folios. Some the initials of the chapters, in red, green and blue colour, are combined with heads of beasts.

² In the Stowe MS 944, the prefatory miniature of the *Liber Vitae* is preceded by six pages of text.

³ Montague R. James and A. Rogers, eds., *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College* (Cambridge, 1912), pp. 426-41; See also Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 900-1066 Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles* 2 (London, 1976), no. 6; Janet Backhouse, D. H. Turner and Leslie Webster, *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art 966-1066* (London, 1984), no. 6; Simon Keynes, 'King Æthelstan's Books', in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, eds., M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 143-201.

The name of the scribe is not known and it has also been suggested that it was written by two scribes.⁴ The manuscript, which was in Chester-le-Street in the tenth century and at Durham in the second half of the eleventh century, has been associated with the reign of King Æthelstan. King of the Anglo-Saxons (924/5-27), king of the English (927-39) and grandson of King Alfred the Great, King Æthelstan died in October 939.⁵ The content of the episcopal lists suggests that the manuscript was made after Æthelstan's visit to the shrine of St Cuthbert in Chester-le-Street in the early tenth century.⁶

Symeon of Durham mentions a copy of Bede's *Life of St Cuthbert* presented by King Æthelstan to the shrine of St Cuthbert in Chester-le-Street in about 934: *unam sancti Cuthberti uitam metricè et prosaice scriptam*.⁷ James, Plummer, Colgrave and Robinson identify the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* with the copy mentioned by Symeon.⁸ Based on these identifications, it can be presumed that the king in the introductory miniature is King Æthelstan and the saint is St Cuthbert.

⁴ According to James, the manuscript was written by two scribes. See Montague R. James, M. Parker, and A. Rogers, eds., *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College*, I (Cambridge, 1912), pp. 421-46. However, it has been argued that the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* was written by one scribe, who also took part in writing a copy of Aldhelm's prose *De virginitate* (BL, Royal MS 7. D. xxiv, ff. 82-162); See Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 900-1066*, p. 38; According to Bishop his hand is in parts of Royal 7. D. xxiv (no. 4) See Terence A. Bishop, *English Caroline Minuscule*, Oxford Paleographical Handbooks (Oxford, 1971).

⁵ The presence of the manuscript at Durham can be traced in contemporary Old English documents, which provide lists of church vessels and record a grant given to the congregation of St Cuthbert by the Bishop of Durham, Walcher (1071-80) see E. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 900-1066*, p. 38. James did not find the book in the *Catalogi Veteres* see J. B. Nichols and son, ed., *Catalogi Veteres Librorum Ecclesiae Cathedralis Dunelm: Catalogues of the Library of Durham Cathedral, at Various Periods: From the Conquest to the Dissolution*, vols. 7 (Durham, 1838). However, James argues, that the manuscript was in the Durham Priory. See M. James, M. Parker, and A. Rogers, eds., *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College*, pp. 426-41.

⁶ Janet Backhouse, D. H. Turner, and Leslie Webster, eds., *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art, 966-1066* (London, 1984), n. 6.

⁷ T. Arnold, ed., Symeon of Durham, *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, RS, 1882, vol. I, p. 111.

⁸ M. R. James, *Catalogue of Manuscripts at Corpus Christi College*, (Cambridge, 1912), no. 183;

The provenance of the manuscript is not known. It is generally believed that it was written in the south of England. There is a dispute between Winchester and Glastonbury as the place of its origin, with most art historians suggesting Winchester.⁹ Higgitt, Page and Robinson argue that the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* was written in Glastonbury.¹⁰ However, the similarities between the figures in the introductory miniature of the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* and the figures in the embroideries found in the tomb of St Cuthbert point to Winchester as the place of origin (fig. 26).¹¹

The inscriptions on the embroideries reveal that they were ordered by Æfflaed, the wife of King Edward the Elder, for Frithestan, bishop of Winchester.¹² It has been suggested that the embroideries came into the possession of King Æthelstan, who donated them to St Cuthbert's shrine in Chester-le-Street in either

C. Plummer, *Beda Opera Historica*, Tom. I, p. cxlvii, note; Bertram Colgrave, *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: a Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life* (Cambridge, reprinted, 1985); Armitage J. Robinson, *The Saxon Bishops of Wells*, (London, 1919), p. 13; Armitage J. Robinson, *The Times of St Dunstan*, (Oxford, 1923), pp. 53-4.

⁹ Francis Wormald, 'Anniversary Address', *The Antiquaries Journal* XLVII (1967), pp. 163, pt II; Francis Wormald considers the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* as a Winchester product; Examining the lists of the bishops, Deshman claims that the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* was made in Wessex, favouring Winchester. He argues that Robinson's argument against Winchester is not strong enough since there is insufficient information about the arts of that time in Glastonbury; Temple agrees that the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* was written in Southern England, probably Winchester see E. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 900-1066*, p. 38.

¹⁰ John Higgitt, 'Glastonbury, Dunstan, Monasticism and Manuscripts', *Art History* 2 (1979), p. 278; When analysing the episcopal lists, Robinson found that a recent Bishop of Winchester was omitted. Furthermore, a later manuscript, BL, Cotton MS Tiberius B.v, which is connected with Glastonbury, presents the same lists. See Armitage J. Robinson, *The Saxon Bishops of Wells* (London, 1919).

¹¹ Wormald suggests that there are similarities with the head of St Cuthbert in the frontispiece of the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* and those in the embroideries, the stole and the maniple, found in the tomb of St Cuthbert. See F. Wormald, 'Anniversary Address', *The Antiquaries Journal* (1967), p. 163.

¹² In ASC(C, D) Frithstan is mentioned under the year 910: 'This year Frithestan succeeded to the bishopric at Winchester.' And, under the year 932 (D): 'This year died bishop Frithstan.' See Dorothy Whitelock, *English Historical Documents* (London, 1955), pp.192-200.

931 or 937. There is some dispute about the dating of the manuscript, although it is generally believed to be the first half of the tenth century.¹³

Granted by King Edgar at Winchester, the New Minster Charter (288 x162 mm) commemorates the adoption of the Rule of St Benedict and confirms the new regime at the religious house. The text, entirely in gold ink, is written by a single scribe using a fine early English Caroline minuscule with the headings of the chapters in uncials.¹⁴ The introductory miniature is considered as a fully developed example of the Winchester style in painting during the later Anglo-Saxon period.¹⁵ The manuscript, written in hermeneutic Latin, at Winchester, is in the form of a codex and not a single sheet charter. The manuscript is dated from the second half of the tenth century. The date inscribed on fol. 3v is 966.¹⁶ Evidence

¹³ There is some dispute about the dating of the manuscript. Some art historians place it in c. 934, others in c.937 and some between 934 and 937. Colgrave, taking into consideration the dates of the latest bishops in the lists of the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti*, dates the manuscript between 934 and 938. According to the papal and episcopal lists, ff. 59-64v, Ælfheah of Winchester and Æthelgar of Crediton became bishops between June and December 934. See Bertram Colgrave, ed. text and trans., *Two Lives of St Cuthbert: a Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life* (Cambridge, 1940); A much earlier date was suggested by James, who places the manuscript in the ninth century, see James, M. Parker, and A. Rogers, eds., 1912. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College* (Cambridge, 1912), pp. 1-250, I; Millar places the manuscript around the year 934 see Eric G. Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts from the Xth to the XIIIth Century* (Paris and Brussels, 1926), p. 77; Robinson argues that the manuscript was not given to the see in 934. He notes that in the lists of the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* the last bishop of Wells, Ælfheah, died in 937 or 938. He suggests that the book was promised by King Æthelstan in 934 and given to the shrine in 937, see Armitage J. Robinson, *The Saxon Bishops of Wells* (London, 1923); Temple agrees with the date 937, see E. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, p. 38; According to Francis Wormald, in 937 King Æthelstan visited the shrine of St. Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street and presented the shrine with a copy of Bede's *Vitae Cuthberti* see Francis Wormald, 'Anniversary Address', *The Antiquaries Journal* (1967), p. 163.

¹⁴ J. Backhouse, D. H. Turner, L. Webster, eds., *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art 966-1066* (London, 1984), no.16; Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 900-1066: Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles 2* (London, 1976), no 16; Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church*. Oxford Historical Monographs (Oxford and New York, 1995), p. 6.

¹⁵ J. Backhouse, D. H. Turner, L. Webster, *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art 966-1066*, no. 26.

¹⁶ Wormald questions the date of the charter. Moreover, examining its form and content, he argues that the document cannot be considered as a genuine charter. The Sherborne Chartulary

suggests that it was commissioned by Bishop Æthelwold.¹⁷ The charter is witnessed by King Edgar, Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, the king's two sons, two royal ladies, Queen Ælfthryth and Eadgifu, King Edgar's grandmother and widow of Edward the Elder, Oswald, Archbishop of York, and Æthelwold.¹⁸

Richard Gameson describes the charter as having the unusual form of a small codex and the format of a *de luxe* liturgical book.¹⁹ Francis Wormald suggests that its unusual form and content could be explained only if the document was meant to be kept on the altar as a record commemorating the introduction of the

commemorates the end of the violent quarrel between the community of Sherborne and the bishop of Salisbury in 1146. The charturary is related to the New Minster Charter, as is also written in the form of a liturgical book. Wormald suggests that both manuscripts seem to fit into the custom of having important charters written on the blank leaves of gospel books, so that they could be preserved on the altar. He argues that if the New Minster Charter is a document of this kind, then it may not be directly related to King Edgar and that the given date, 966, may not be the right one. Wormald suggests that Æthelwold, one of the leaders of the ecclesiastical reform, concocted the charter, after the replacement of the clerks with the monks, in order to have it preserved on the altar as a memorial of the great event, and not as a charter. Francis Wormald suggests that the manuscript was a 'sumptuous record', a 'solemn commemoration' of King Edgar's *priueligium* to the New Minster in Winchester, which may have been intended to be kept on the altar there. See F. Wormald, 'Late Anglo-Saxon Art: Some Questions and Suggestions', in *Collected Writings: Studies in Medieval Art from the Sixth to the Twelfth Centuries*, eds. J. Alexander, T. J. Brown, J. Gibbs (Oxford, 1982), pp. 109-10; Temple agrees with Wormald's dating of the manuscript and dates King Edgar's Charter after 966, see E. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, p. 44.

¹⁷ Bishop Æthelwold had commissioned the Benedictional of Æthelwold (London, British Library, MS Add. 49598) between 971 and 984. In the preface, the scribe, the monk Codeman, tells the reader that the manuscript was made at the request of 'the great Æthelwold'. He adds that the bishop 'commanded that many frames should be made in this book, which should be well adorned and filled with various figures decorated with numerous beautiful colours and with gold'. The illustrations, which show sumptuous, royal overtones and generous use of rich colours and touches of gold, bear close resemblance to the New Minster Charter prefatory miniature. Consequently, it is very probable that Bishop Æthelwold was involved in the production of the New Minster Charter. See C. R. Dodwell, *Anglo-Saxon Painting: 800-1100*, p. 99.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 109. See also J. Backhouse, D. H. Turner, L. Webster, eds., in *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art, 966-1066* (London, 1984), p. 47.

¹⁹ Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church* (Oxford, 1995), p. 6.

Benedictine monks into the religious house. So, it is possible that the charter was kept on the altar as a constant commemoration of the event.²⁰

The introductory miniature of the New Minster Charter is considered the earliest example of the 'Winchester Style' in painting, which has its origins in Carolingian manuscripts from Tours and Metz.²¹ Although there is no inscription on the miniature (fol. 2v) to identify the king, the miniature is placed opposite an elegiac couplet, written in gold uncials on folio 3r, which reads:

SIC CELSO RESIDET SOLIO QUI CONDITIT ASTRA

REX VENERANS EADGAR PRONUS ADORAT EUM.²²

The couplet along with the content of the manuscript and the witness list leave little doubt that the king depicted on the introductory miniature is King Edgar.

²⁰ See Francis Wormald, 'Late Anglo-Saxon Art: Some Questions and Suggestions', pp. 109-10; Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church*, p. 265.

²¹ In manuscript illumination, the Winchester school, which flourished at Winchester in the late tenth century, presents rich borders of trellis acanthus wrapping parallel gold bars, such as in the frontispiece of the New Minster Charter, or elaborate frames (either arch-shaped or rectangular), such as those in the Benedictional of Æthelwold. See Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church*, p. 482; see also Michelle P. Brown, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts* (London, 1991), p. 14.

²² 'Thus he who created the stars sits on the lofty throne; King Edgar, inclined in veneration, adores him.' See M. Lapidge, 'Æthelwold as Scholar and Teacher', in *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. B. Yorke (Woodbridge, 1988), pp. 89-117, at p. 96; Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church*, p. 7; Mechthild Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the Benedictine Reform*, (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 309-10; Alexander R. Rumble, ed. and trans., *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents Relating to the Topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman City and its Minsters* (Oxford, 2002), p. 70; Catherine E. Karkov, 'Edgar and the Royal Women of the Monastic Reform', in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 84-118.

The New Minster *Liber Vitae* manuscript (260 x 150mm; text space: 120 x 100mm) was produced in the New Minster at Winchester. The parchment codex is written in Latin and Old English, in insular minuscule script. It is a liturgical manuscript used daily in the minster for liturgical commemoration. It consists of the Register and Martyrology and lists of the brethren and Hyde Abbey monks and benefactors for whom prayers should be said and whose names were commemorated daily during the service.²³

The subdeacon would bring the *Liber Vitae* to the altar and read out some of the names in it.²⁴ Consequently, it is fairly certain that the *Liber Vitae* was kept on the altar. Its pristine condition, nonetheless, suggests that this specific was not used daily and that, perhaps, another copy was used in its place or daily names inserted in wax tablets.²⁵ The manuscript also contains miscellanea in Latin and Old English of various dates.²⁶

The manuscript was produced in New Minster at Winchester and the date assigned to it varies between 1020 and 1030.²⁷ The date 1031 is inscribed over an

²³ See Simon Keynes *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester, British Library Stowe 944*, EEMF xxvi (Copenhagen, 1996).

²⁴ Backhouse, Turner, Webster, *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art 966-1066* (London, 1984), no. 62.

²⁵ In monasteries, the monks also used wax tablets for copying, since parchments were precious, see Michelle Brown, 'The Role of the Wax Tablet in Medieval Literacy: A Reconsideration in Light of a Recent Find from York', *British Library Journal* 20 (1994): 1-16; *Stili* for writing on wax tablets were found in Whitby, see Richard Marsden, 'Early Northumbria: Wearmouth-Jarrow and Ceolfrith's Pandects' in *The Text of the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 79; Secretaries writing down the Psalms on a scroll and wax tablet are depicted flanking King David in the Vespasian Psalter (BL, Cotton MS Vespasian A. i., fol. 30v; fig. 47).

²⁶ E. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 900-1066* (London, 1976), no 16.

²⁷ It was produced in New Minster at Winchester probably at about 1031 according to Temple. However, Tselos dates the manuscript between 1020 and 1035. See Dimitris Tselos, 'English Manuscript Illustration and the Utrecht Psalter', *The Art Bulletin* 41 (1959), p. 139; Herbert dates the manuscript between 1016 and 1020. See J. Herbert, *Illuminated Manuscripts* (London, 1911) p. 117; D. Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Art* (1984), p. 184; Jan Gerchow dates the manuscript and the lightly coloured drawings to 1031/32 see J. Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a

erasure on a passage on the six ages of the world (f. 33v). The scribe of the *Liber Vitae*, Ælsinus, was a monk of the Abbey in the first half of the eleventh century.²⁸ All the three-pages of tinted drawings, sketched in brown ink with some details in yellow, red, green and blue, are created by the same artist.

All the evidence indicates that the manuscripts in question are likely to have been royal donations to monastic foundations. The depiction of crowned kings and haloed divine and sacred figures in their miniatures seems designed to further reinforce their close association with the Anglo-Saxon elite, especially clergy and royalty.

The dimensions of the manuscripts are not large. In each case they are the right size to be held in the hand and looked at whilst being held; each one gives a sense of intimacy and privilege. The precious materials used in the production of the three manuscripts and their prefatory miniatures imply that they were very precious. Since they have much in common with extremely beautiful gems, it comes as no surprise that these luxurious manuscripts set out to address the privileged elite, both secular and monastic; as befits their royal patronage, the best artists of the time were engaged. It seems likely that they would have been kept very carefully and held by only a few people, perhaps only by those who appreciated in full their exquisite beauty and precious materials. This is especially evident in the full-page painted prefatory miniature of King Edgar, in the New Minster Charter (BL, Cotton MS Vespasian A.viii, fol. 2v), which is indeed exquisite in the lavish touches of gold, its sparkling effects and light-catching

Conqueror', in C. Hicks, ed., *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1992), p. 222.

²⁸ David M. Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Art: From the seventh century to the Norman Conquest* (Winchester, 1984), p.184. The monk Ælsinus (Ælfsige) also wrote parts in the Ælfwine's prayerbook (BL, Cotton MS Titus D. xxviii) between 1023 and 1032.

quality (fig. 4). At a time when books and painted miniatures were rare, a miniature depicting an Anglo-Saxon King glittering in gold and standing before Christ in Majesty might have seemed like an image made in heaven. Clearly, miniature artists were aware of the desirability of depicting Anglo-Saxon kings at their best, particularly when they were shown in the presence of sacred figures. The kings would have sought to please the divine powers and impress the viewer and, in turn, the artists would have tried to promote the propagandistic goals of their royal patrons alongside Christian ideals.

Case study

This thesis has benefited to a large extent from Catherine Karkov's seminal study, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, Anna Gannon's, *The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage*, and C. R. Dodwell's, *Anglo-Saxon Gestures and the Roman Stage*.²⁹ Examining the iconography of the surviving Anglo-Saxon royal images and their cultural and historical milieu, Catherine Karkov provides valuable information and bibliographies regarding the nature of Anglo-Saxon kingship. Perceptive iconographic observations, stemming from the juxtaposition of Anglo-Saxon, Continental, and Byzantine images, along with relevant texts, contribute significantly to a better understanding concerning the meaning, function, and development of the iconography of the Anglo-Saxon monarch. Karkov's study examines closely the royal iconography of the Anglo-Saxon kings, Alfred, Edgar, Cnut, Edward the Confessor and Queen Emma.³⁰

²⁹ See Catherine E. Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004); Anna Gannon, *The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage: Sixth to Eighth Centuries* (Oxford, 2003); Charles R. Dodwell, *Anglo-Saxon Gestures and the Roman Stage*, CSASE 28 (Cambridge, 2000).

³⁰ Catherine Karkov includes in her study the Alfred's Jewel assuming that it does represent King Alfred the Great.

However, this thesis moves beyond the broad iconographical spectrum of Anglo-Saxon kingship and suggests that three of the extant Anglo-Saxon royal images stand out from the others with an idiosyncratic iconography, closely related to intercession and the Christian doctrine of salvation. Promoting the spirituality of the earthly king and his exclusive relationship with sacred or divine authorities, the imagery suggests that the Anglo-Saxon ruler receives God's sanction and the promise of salvation.

By contrast with the other royal images that portray the Anglo-Saxon monarch seated or interacting with other personages in his court, these three miniatures depict the king standing, folding or unfolding his body, but never seated, before divine or sacred authorities. Similar images of leaders in an encounter with God feature in the iconography of Junius 11 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11) and the Old English Hexateuch (BL, Cotton MS Claudius B. iv), presenting exactly the same attitude towards the divine presence: they are never seated but stand in reverence or in various degrees of prostration before them.

For the identification and assessment of the single character of the three royal images and for an insight into their unconventional iconographic status Gannon's *Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage* and Dodwell's *Anglo-Saxon Gestures and the Roman Stage* proved critical. By analysing the iconography of the early Anglo-Saxon coinage Gannon shows its pivotal role in the transmission of ideas and motifs, its strong religious character and the close relationship of some of the designs to manuscript illuminations. Of great importance to this thesis is Gannon's assessment of the religious imagery, Christian or pagan, in the designs of the coinage, and her suggestion that contemporary literature and theological writings provide a basis for the understanding of certain motifs and symbols.

The evaluation of the gestures and postures of the figures in the prefatory miniatures is of great importance in this thesis since it sheds more light on the interpretation of the original context of the compositions. Dodwell's study of Anglo-Saxon gestures encouraged this thesis to follow a systematic approach in the assessment of gestures and postures and to have an increased sensitivity to their variations and consequently to their interpretation and classification.³¹

On the whole, the iconography of the miniatures consists of crowned kings, haloed saints, God in a mandorla carried by angels, a veiled queen, books, a large gold altar cross and monks in their stalls. In other words, it displays fundamental Christian iconographical imagery, well-established by the Anglo-Saxon period. The miniatures in question were evidently meant to be readily understood by their medieval audience; therefore, they used well-established iconographical traditions.³² Their manuscripts were royal commissions offered to monastic foundations hence their iconography addressed both royal and monastic milieux.

Iconographical influences also include early Christian art with scenes depicting the Ascension of Christ and the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in the New Testament. As we shall see later, the iconography of the translation of Enoch and various encounters between God and Israelite leaders, such as Noah, Abraham and Moses, in the Old Testament, might have supplied further iconographical models. Accordingly, the figures of King David and King Solomon in the Old Testament and of Christ in the New Testament offered potential models

³¹ Dodwell, in his book *Anglo-Saxon Gestures and the Roman Stage*, suggests that there are strong similarities in form and meaning between gestures in late Anglo-Saxon art and those depicted in the illustrated manuscripts of the plays of the second Roman century BC playwright, Terence. These similarities occur only in England during the late Anglo-Saxon period and cannot be traced in the medieval art of the continent.

³² The New Minster Charter and the New Minster *Liber Vitae* were part of the monastic history since they were produced and kept in the New Minster.

for the Anglo-Saxon notion of kingship. Furthermore, increasing awareness of Carolingian and Ottonian royal portraiture, drawing on Byzantine prototypes, provided a fresh stimulus for the development of the iconography of kingship in Anglo-Saxon England.

With the objective of reconstructing the original meaning of the prefatory miniatures and the contexts in which they were used, this study addresses the following questions: how and why these three prefatory miniatures are differentiated from other presentation scenes? How is the relationship between the Anglo-Saxon monarchy and the sacred or divine figures presented in the miniatures and what are the motives behind certain iconographic choices? Do the prefatory images suggest an exclusive relationship between the anointed and the sacred? Is the Anglo-Saxon king depicted as God's elect? Does this depiction carry the promise of salvation and why does this matter for the iconography of the Anglo-Saxon ruler? Also, what are the possible visual models and written sources that influenced the royal iconography of the prefatory miniatures?

Methodology

This study presents a critical analysis of the iconography of the prefatory miniatures, in chronological order. Firstly, it traces their differences and similarities and juxtaposes them with other Anglo-Saxon miniatures depicting royal or other important figures. The collected data is then cross-compared with relevant texts and images from Carolingian, Ottonian and in a few cases from Byzantine art, with the aim of delineating the relationship between Anglo-Saxon kingship and sacred or divine figures.

It is imperative to use textual and contextual analysis in order to identify the iconography of the scenes and to assess the cultural and historical contexts in which these images were produced and the reasons for their development, their

meaning and function. In particular, such an approach aims to trace the identities of the artist and the patron of the miniatures and establish how these differ from others and why that matters. As established earlier, this process involves considerable historical research into the primary sources of the period. The iconography of the collected data is, therefore, juxtaposed with various literary and other texts, including Anglo-Saxon poems, homilies, letters, laws, charters and writs.

Using a synthesis of the above methods, the main aim is to reconstruct the original meaning of the miniatures taking into account the time and place in which they were made, the style and culture of the period and the patronage. Combining data from previous sources, including cultural themes, texts from past cultures, available contemporary texts and other artistic precedents, the synthetic interpretation exposes the iconography of the miniatures to a broader context of ideas. To this end, political and economic issues and religious and social practices are considered, as well as passages from the Old Testament and other early Christian writers, often quoted in Anglo-Saxon homilies. Besides the deepening of our understanding of the miniatures' original meaning through their historical contextualisation, the synthetic approach reveals further typological parallels in the iconography of Christian thought through paired events and personages.

This study does not focus on the sculpture of the Anglo-Saxon period but on the coinage, since it is the coinage rather than the sculpture that provides images and titles of Anglo-Saxon kings, including those in question here. The archaeological evidence provided by coins—a very different medium to manuscript illumination—suggests that the iconographical development of the coinage is closely related to the formation of the Anglo-Saxon law and kingship. Undoubtedly, Roman coins found in Britain or brought over from the Continent

would have also provided a sense of the image of rulership in the classical tradition.

Examining the iconography of late Anglo-Saxon coins, the focus is on the spatial relations forged between royal images, regalia and Christian symbols. The subsequent iconographical observations are assessed in relation to the relevant laws on coinage issued by the Anglo-Saxon kings. Recent archaeological discoveries, such as the Staffordshire Hoard—the largest hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold ever brought to light, found in 2009 on farmland near Lichfield—brought forward more Anglo-Saxon artefacts for research and contributed to a further understanding of the period.

The Old Testament plays an important role in the argument of this thesis that the Anglo-Saxon monarchy owes much to the model of leadership provided by the great patriarchs and kings of the Israelites. Carefully assessed are certain passages in the Old Testament, including the stories of King David and King Solomon which recur in the homilies of Wulfstan and Ælfric. Permeating not only the iconography but also the formation of Anglo-Saxon laws and charters, such references to the stories of the Old Testament provide a valuable source of information for the development the Anglo-Saxon kingship.

The translation of Enoch and various encounters between God and the Old Testament leaders such as Noah, Abraham and Moses supplied further iconographical models. The stories of the Old Testament kings, King David and King Solomon, in particular, would have offered potential models for the formation of Anglo-Saxon kinship.

The word 'iconography', meaning 'writing from symbols', refers to the subject matter of art derived from written sources such as scripture and mythology. The iconography of a work of art needs to be examined in the context

of its time. A primarily iconographical method is adopted here to examine the introductory miniatures with the precise aim of considering the original meaning of their subject matter and the relationship fostered between the Anglo-Saxon ruler and the divine authorities.

The iconographical approach seeks to assess the content of the miniatures by engaging primarily in a visual description. This is followed by the interpretation of the miniatures through contextual analysis. This is to say, the introductory images are compared with other miniatures and the collected data are interpreted against the evidence drawn from a variety of written sources. Adopting a synthetic approach, the contextual analysis exposes the miniatures to the wider historical context of the period and traces the relationships they forge within it.

More specifically, the visual analysis provided here traces the way in which the artist draws the miniature and the story that the miniature itself tells to the viewer. It seeks to examine the way in which the two-dimensional pictorial plane is used in order to convey the work's idea. The study does not, however, engage in a detailed stylistic analysis since its predominant focus is the content of the miniatures rather than their form. The only reason why style is addressed at all is to identify the place of origin of the miniatures, to trace possible artistic influences from the Continent and to give a general insight into the period. In addition, considerable emphasis is placed on the relationship established between the depicted figures and the pictorial elements, including treatment of space, scale, size, format, colour and materials. The thesis focuses on the way in which the artist organised or juxtaposed the pictorial elements in order to express royal and divine grandeur and to convey social class and propagandistic ideas. As it is assumed that certain pictorial choices would also reflect ideological expectations

raised by the patron and the audience, such choices may reveal propagandistic objectives on behalf of the king and the ruling elite. Furthermore, concentrating on the gestures, postures, size, and the placement of the figures in the pictorial space, a critical iconographic analysis is able to trace the way in which the artist is able to represent the social hierarchy of the period.

Wessex and Winchester

The provenance of the manuscripts and the kings depicted in the miniatures are closely linked to the kingdom of Wessex and the Old and the New Minster in Winchester. As the residence of the kings of Wessex, the city of Winchester presented important opportunities for royal patronage and artistic activity, fully expressed in the Winchester style. For this reason it is important to examine the history and position of the city of Winchester in the kingdom of Wessex and its role in the development of late Anglo-Saxon kingship.

It was under King Alfred the Great that the kingdom of Wessex, one of the most important kingdoms of the early Anglo-Saxon period, emerged strong and confident to play the role of the protagonist in the last stages of Anglo-Saxon history before the Norman Conquest. The history of its capital, the ancient city of Winchester, since it became the residence of the kings of Wessex, is closely connected with the Anglo-Saxon monarchy, royal patronage and lively artistic activity, generating the so-called Winchester style.

The royalty of Wessex founded all three of Winchester's major religious houses, the Old Minster, the New Minster and the Nunnaminster, and had their palace adjacent to them. These minsters also became the burial place of many Anglo-Saxon kings. Religious communities began to be established as early

as the seventh century when King Kenwalh founded the Cathedral or Old Minster.³³

The Anglo-Saxon kings depicted in the prefatory miniatures, Æthelstan, Edgar and Cnut, are closely associated with the history of the Kingdom of Wessex and the New and Old Minsters at Winchester, since in the tenth century the kings of Wessex became kings of England.

From 931 onwards, on his coinage King Æthelstan, grandson of King Alfred the Great, bears the title *Rex Totius Britanniae* and sometimes *Basileus Totius Britanniae*. King Edgar, great grandson of King Alfred the Great, appears on his coinage with the title *Edgar Rex*, sometimes with *Anglorum* or *To Bri* added. In the eleventh century King Cnut, the Danish conqueror, replaced King Æthelred the Unready, and in 1017 his marriage to King Æthelred's widow Emma/Ælfgifu of Normandy, helped him to establish his position as an Anglo-Saxon king.³⁴ The title on his coinage is *Cnut Rex*, with or without *Anglorum* following his predecessor's, *Aethelraed Rex*, again with or without *Anglorum*.

In contrast to the king of Kent, Æthelberht, who was the first Anglo-Saxon king to accept Christian baptism soon after Pope Gregory's mission to Britain in 597 led by Augustine, the West Saxon kings were slow to convert to Christianity.³⁵

³³ Roger N. Quirk, 'Winchester New Minster and its Tenth Century Tower', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, ser. 3: 34 (1961): 16 ff; Robert Deshman, *Anglo-Saxon Art After Alfred*, *Art Bulletin* 56 (1974), pp. 192-5.

³⁴ ASE A. 1017. 'In this year King Canute obtained the whole realm of the English race, and divided itto four parts And then before the Kalends of August, the king commanded the relict of King Ethelred, Richard's daughter, to be fetched for his wife; that was Elfgive in English, Emma in French.'

³⁵ At some point before 581, Æthelberht married a Christian wife, Bertha, who was a Frank and the daughter of a former king of Paris. He himself remained pagan, but he allowed Bertha to practice her religion without interference. In 597, a Christian mission, sent from Rome by Pope Gregory the Great and led by Augustine, arrived on the Isle of Thanet in Æthelberht's kingdom. The king

However, it was the West Saxon King Ine (688-726) who was the first king to enforce infant baptism and the payment of tithes on his people.³⁶

At the end of his reign, King Alfred the Great, King of Wessex (871-99), adopted the title 'King of the Anglo-Saxons', a title also used by his son and successor King Edward the Elder (899-924). The consolidation of kingship under King Alfred gave his successors the opportunity to expand monarchy even further and assume the title 'King of England', which clearly reflects the rapidity of the monarchy's expansion throughout the country.

A study of the iconography of the prefatory miniatures of the New Minster Charter and the *Liber Vitae* of the New Minster reveals the close connection of both King Edgar and King Cnut with Winchester, the episcopal see of the West Saxons.³⁷ In 648, the king of Wessex Cenwalh built the church of SS Peter and Paul known as the Old Minster, which became a cathedral in 660 when the West Saxon

received the missionaries with initial reserve, insisting on a meeting in the open air to nullify any magic spells that they might cast, but he was won over by their preaching and offered them hospitality in his capital city at Canterbury; see *HE* i.25. Soon afterwards, Æthelberht himself accepted Christian baptism, and with his support the Roman mission enjoyed great support in Kent and in the neighbouring kingdom of Essex. See N. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 5-14; Nicholas Brooks, 'The Creation and Early Structure of the kingdom of Kent', in Stephen R. Bassett, *The Origins of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms* (Leicester, 1989), pp. 55-74; *The Charters of St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury, and Minster in Thanet*, ed. S. E. Kelly, Anglo-Saxon Charters 4 (Oxford, 1995). In 635 King Cynegalis was the first West Saxon ruler to be baptised by bishop Birinus; In 689 the West Saxon king, Cædwalla (685-88), after his abdication, went to Rome to be baptised and died there on 20 April 689. See Bede, *HE* v.7; David Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings* (London, 2000), pp. 51-3, 116-22; Barbara Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 1995), pp. 58-9, 65-7, 73-4 and 80-4.

³⁶ Surviving as an appendix to King Alfred's law code, the earliest known written West Saxon laws issued by King Ine contain clauses which enforce Christian practices. See Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 71-3; Barbara Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 1995), pp. 55-66, 79-84, 90-1, 259-62 and 299-309.

³⁷ Situated in the valley of the river Itchen, Winchester was the Roman city of Venta Belgarum until the early fifth century. The West Saxon bishopric had already moved to Winchester in 660s.

bishopric moved to Winchester. The Old Minster was situated east of the Anglo-Saxon royal palace and was probably intended to be a palace church.³⁸

The ancient city of Winchester prospered more after the establishment of a fortified *burh* by King Alfred who had also planned the construction of two new ecclesiastical foundations in the south-eastern part of the town.

After Alfred's death, the royal patronage of Winchester continued. From the inscriptions on the Cuthbert embroideries we know that they were commissioned between 909 and 916 by Ælflaed, Queen of Edward the Elder, for Frithestan, Bishop of Winchester.³⁹ The subsequent history of these works also emphasizes the close connections between Winchester and the Anglo-Saxon rulers, for later the embroideries came into the possession of King Æthelstan (925-939), who donated them in 934 to the shrine of St Cuthbert in Chester-le-Street.

King Alfred's son, King Edward the Elder, realised his father's construction programme and by 901 the New Minster, north of the Old Minster, and later the Nunnaminster, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, stood proudly in Winchester.⁴⁰ In the 960s and 70s, King Edgar built the episcopal palace in the south-western part of the town and enclosed the monastic foundations of the Old Minster, the New Minster and the Nunnaminster with boundary walls.

³⁸ It is possible that by the end of King Alfred's reign, the royal court was already at Winchester.

³⁹ Robert Deshmann, 'Anglo-Saxon Art after Alfred', *Art Bulletin* 56 (1974), pp. 176-200.

⁴⁰ The mother of King Edward the Elder, and wife of King Alfred the Great, Ealhswith, '*monialium aedificatrix monasterii*', is associated with the foundation of the Nunnaminster, which was built on land belonging to her.

Focusing on the New Minster, where Æthelgar was the abbot, King Edgar 'ordered the church of the New Minster, begun by his father, King Edmund, but completed by himself, to be solemnly dedicated'.⁴¹

King Æthelred started the reconstruction of the Old Minster.⁴² Soon, and probably under the initiative of Bishop Æthelgar, King Æthelred started a similar building programme at the New Minster, where a six-storey tower was erected.⁴³ On 7 July between 980 and 987, during the dedication ceremony, performed by Bishop Æthelgar and Archbishop Dunstan, the first storey of the Tower was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the second to the Holy Trinity, the third to the Holy Cross, the fourth to All Saints, the fifth to the archangel Michael and the sixth to the Four Evangelists.⁴⁴ Later, in 1012, King Æthelred granted to Queen Emma/Ælfgifu property in Winchester, known as 'Godbegot'.⁴⁵

Winchester was also the burial place of members of the English royal house in the first half of the tenth century. King Alfred the Great chose Winchester for

⁴¹ *The Chronicle of John of Worcester: The Annals from 450-1066*, eds., Reginald R. Darlington and Patrick McGurk, trans., Jennifer Bray, 2 vols (Oxford, 1995-8), s.a. 972, p. 420.

⁴² On the 20 October 980 the dedication ceremony of the Old Minster was attended by King Æthelred, Archbishop Dunstan, Bishop Æthelwold, several bishops and a large number of councillors. See Wulfstan, *Narratio Metrica de Sancto Swithuno*, ed., A. Campbell (Zurich, 1950), pp. 67-8.

⁴³ 'a tower of marvellous height and extraordinary beauty, the like of which never existed in this country in former times, and which appears unique to those who have travelled in many regions and holy.' See Simon Keynes, ed., *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester*, *British Library Stowe 944*, EEMF xxvi (Copenhagen, 1966), pp. 16-48.

⁴⁴ (BL, Stowe MS 944, fols 11v-12v), see *Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester*, ed. W. de Gray Birch (London, 1892), pp. 9-10; Roger N. Quirk, 'Winchester New Minster and its Tenth-Century Tower', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, ser. 3: 34 (Oxford, 1961); Richard Gem, 'Towards an Iconography of Anglo-Saxon Architecture', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 46 (1983), pp. 1-18.

⁴⁵ S 925; 'Godbegot' was near the New Minster, on the north side of the High Street. See Martin Biddle, ed., *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: An Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday*, *Winchester Studies*, I (Oxford, 1972), pp. 37-8 (Survey of c. 1110, no. 23), pp. 158-9 and 553 the name 'Godbegot' and 340-2 (identification of the tenement, with map) and Derek Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester*, *Winchester Studies* 2 (Oxford, 1985), pt i: pl. IIIa; and pt ii: pp. 486-92.

his own burial, which took place on 26 October 899 in the Old Minster. Later, his son King Edward the Elder arranged for the removal of King Alfred's remains from the Old to the New Minster. And on 3 December 902, King Edward's mother and King Alfred's wife, Ealhswith, was buried in a chapel in the New Minster, next to her husband, King Alfred.⁴⁶ King Edward's death followed on 17 July 924 and the king was buried to the right of the altar at the New Minster.⁴⁷ Obviously, King Edward favoured the New Minster and elevated it to a royal foundation. However, there seems to have been some disapproval of the Old Minster and, perhaps, of the New Minster as well, by King Æthelstan.

The fact that the king, after his death at Gloucester, was buried at Malmesbury suggests that Æthelstan did not share the feelings of his father, Edward, and his grandfather, Alfred, for Winchester and its minsters.⁴⁸ However, Æthelstan had already shown his preference for Malmesbury, when he ordered the burial of his cousins, Ælfwine and Æthelwine, killed at the battle of Brunanburh in 937, to take place there.⁴⁹ Æthelstan was, furthermore, brought up at the Mercian court by Æthelflaed, Lady of the Mercians, perhaps as part of a policy of unification.

⁴⁶ ASC (ABCD) 903, beginning with events which took place in the closing months of 902. See Dorothy Whitelock, *English Historical Documents* (London, 1955), p. 191. The day of Ealhswith's death is recorded in a calendar which may have originated at Winchester. See Simon Keynes, ed., *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey*, EEMF xxvi (Copenhagen, 1996), p. 114, no. 40. For Ealhswith's burial, see p. 81.

⁴⁷ Simon Keynes, ed., *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey*, p. 81. See also *The Chronicle of John of Worcester: The Annals from 450-1066*, eds., Reginald R. Darlington and Patrick McGurk, trans., Jennifer Bray, Oxford Medieval Texts, 2 vols (Oxford, 1995-8), s.a. 924, p. 384.

⁴⁸ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS, I, p. 157; *The Chronicle of John of Worcester* eds., Reginald R. Darlington and P. McGurk, trans., J. Bray (Oxford, 1995-8), p. 394.

⁴⁹ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, p. 394.

Elevating Malmesbury can also be seen as restoring a balance during the restoration of Danelaw and unification of England.⁵⁰ Æthelflæd's marriage to Æthelred, Lord of the Mercians, further strengthened the alliance between Wessex and Mercia. Æthelflæd ruled for eight years after the death of her husband, allying herself with her brother Edward the Elder. She proved a remarkable military leader and Edward's military achievements against the Danes probably owed a lot to Æthelflæd's powerful rule.⁵¹

Keynes suggests that since the councillors in Wessex did not choose Æthelstan as king but Ælfweard, Æthelstan, chosen king only by the Mercians, would have harboured a dislike for Winchester.⁵² One other factor that shows the king's disapproval of Winchester is the fact that he adopted as his favourite saint one from the North, St Cuthbert, also favoured by his great grandfather King Alfred. Moreover, it is likely that King Æthelstan's adoption of the title 'King of All the English' on some coins and his close connection with the Continent, through the marriages of his sisters to continental princes, was a well thought out policy designed to make strong alliances and find support outside of Wessex and Winchester.

⁵⁰ Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians was the eldest daughter of Alfred the Great and his queen, Ealhswith. Her husband was Æthelred, Lord of the Mercians. After his death in 911, she ruled Mercia until she died in 918. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* refers to her as the *Myrcna hlæfdige*, Lady of the Mercians, see ASE A. 918 '... and her body lies at Gloucester, within the east porch of St Peter's church.' See Marios Costambeys, Æthelflæd, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004); Æthelflæd is mentioned by Alfred's biographer Asser, who calls her the first-born child of Alfred and his Mercian bride Ealhswith and a sister to Edward, Æthelgifu, Ælfthryth and Æthelweard, see *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources*, ed. and trans., Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, (Harmondsworth, 1983), p. 90.

⁵¹ Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 324; Variety and innovative character of the designs in the coinage of King Edward the Elder may suggest Æthelflæd's influence. See M. A. S. Blackburn, D. N. Dumville, *Kings, Currency and Alliances: History and Coinage of Southern England in the Ninth Century* (Woodbridge, 1998)

⁵² See Simon Keynes, ed., *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester*, pp. 16-48.

Relics, of course, would have contributed greatly to the power and prosperity of the monastic foundations at Winchester. It can be assumed that when the new foundation acquired the relics of St Judoc (Josse) and launched his cult, its position became even stronger.⁵³

During the 960s, under the reign of King Edgar, the Bishop of Winchester Æthelwold, acting as 'abbot' of the Old Minster, initiated a building programme at the Old Minster and promoted the cult of St Swithun, whose relics were translated within the Old Minster on 15 July 971.⁵⁴ King Edgar ordered a precious reliquary for the saint's remains, which Bishop Æthelwold placed upon an altar within the Old Minster during the second translation on 8 October between 971 and 974.⁵⁵

In the Benedictional of St Æthelwold, St Swithun is depicted in fol. 97v, blessing and holding a book in his left hand (fig. 66). The development of the cult of the ninth-century bishop, St Swithun, was central to the reform of the Old Minster and, at the same time as his translations in 971 and 974, the cathedral was greatly enlarged, first with the addition of a large westwork, dedicated in 980, over the site of his grave, which was formerly located *sub divo* in the atrium west

⁵³ The preface to the *Liber Vitae* gives the account of the 'pious men of Ponthieu who brought the relics of St Judoc across the channel to the New Minster'; see also ACS (F), 'this year Grimbald the priest died and in the same year the New Minster at Winchester was consecrated and (there occurred) St Judoc's arrival'. See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 191.

⁵⁴ St. Swithun was a mid-ninth century bishop of Winchester. See Barbara A. E. Yorke, 'The Bishops of Winchester, the Kings of Wessex and the Development of Winchester in the Ninth and Early Tenth Centuries', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society* 40 (1984), pp. 61-4. See also *Lantfred of Winchester: Translatio et miracula S. Swithuni*, ed. and trans., Michael Lapidge, (Oxford, 2003).

⁵⁵ John Crook, 'King Edgar's Reliquary of St Swithun', *ASE* 21 (1992), pp. 198-9; Lantfred, *Traslatio et miracula S. Swithuni*, ed. and trans., Michael Lapidge; Wulfstan, *Narratio Metrica de S. Swithuno*, ed. A. Campbell (Zürich, 1950), pp. 116-17. See also Wulfstan, *Vita S. Æthelwoldi*, ed., M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1991) ch. 26, p. 42.

of the church, and subsequently by extending the church eastwards. Perhaps to rival these works, a great western tower was added to the New Minster.

Continuing the lavish royal patronage of his predecessors King Cnut became generous patron of Christ Church, Canterbury and the Old Minster, Winchester, giving generous gifts and donations of land to both of them.⁵⁶

Literary sources

The literature of the period is carefully assessed in order to elucidate the historical, political and theological background that formulated the iconography of the late Anglo-Saxon monarchy in the miniatures. The study of the literature starts with the rise of the kings of Wessex, under King Alfred the Great, in the ninth century and ends with their subsequent fall with the Norman Conquest in 1066.

Primary sources such as Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, Ælfric's *Sermones Catholici*, Byrhtferth's *Vita S. Oswaldi* and the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* give a valuable picture of the theological ideas and the ecclesiastical and political history of the period even if they show bias, omit facts or blend them with legend and literature. For instance, Bede's *Historia* is essentially dependent on oral tradition, since earlier written records were relatively few, and as a result he had at times little or no access to information.

The localised character of the *Historia* can be explained by the fact that Bede was living in Northumbria and had close connections with the Northumbrian nobility. Thus, it was easier for him to collect information about the Northumbrian Church than the Church in the southern kingdoms. In addition, his attachment to

⁵⁶ See Henry R. Loyn, *The English Church 940-1154* (London, 2000), pp. 48-66.

his beloved Northumbria is obvious when he tries to elevate its role in English history, diminishing the importance of its great rival, Mercia.⁵⁷

Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* represent the most important sources for the history of the English from the Romans to the Norman Conquest. Focusing on the conflict between the Roman and Celtic Christianity, Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* covers the ecclesiastical and political history of England from the time of Julius Caesar's invasion in 55 B.C to the date of its completion in 731.⁵⁸ By drawing examples from imperial Rome and the Israelites in the Old Testament the *Historia* creates a sense of national awareness and Christian unity for the new English kingdoms of the seventh century. Providing an account of the life at the court of the earlier Anglo-Saxon kings who converted to Christianity, Bede's history is essential for the perception of kingship in the late Anglo-Saxon period.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a collection of seven annals in Old English, is influenced by the *Historia*, especially in the chronological framework of its early parts.⁵⁹ The original manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was written late in the ninth century, probably in Wessex, during the reign of King Alfred the Great. Multiple copies of the original manuscript were distributed to monasteries across England, where they were independently updated. For this reason the annals deviate from one another or contradict each other. Much of the information given in the Chronicle is not recorded elsewhere.

⁵⁷ His close connections with the Northumbrian nobility are evident in the *Historia's* preface where Bede dedicates his work to Ceolwulf, king of Northumbria and mentions that the king had received an earlier draft of the book. See Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History* (Oxford, 1969) pp. 3-7.

⁵⁸ Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, eds., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (OMT 1969; rev. ed. 1991).

⁵⁹ C. Plummer and J. Earle, eds., *Two Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1892, 1899).

The Chronicle features a poem about King Æthelstan, *The Battle of Brunanburh* (937) and two poems about King Edgar, *The Coronation of King Edgar* (973) and *The Death of King Edgar* (975). In the case of King Cnut, the *Chronicle* does not provide a clear insight into the series of events from 1016–35. Nevertheless, it gives accounts of the arrangements in 1016–35 and the Oxford meeting, the consecration of the minster at Assandun, which commemorated the Danish victory of 1016, and the translation of the relics of St Ælfheah from St Paul's, in London, to Canterbury, in 1023.

Several royal biographies provide a valuable insight into Anglo-Saxon kingship, such as Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni*, which shows the development of medieval kingship on the Continent, making it an important source for purposes of comparison.⁶⁰ However, it is Asser's *Vita Ælfredi Regis Anglorum-Saxonum* (Life of Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons), written in 893, that gives us a unique picture of an Anglo-Saxon king in his relations with court.⁶¹ It is the major source of information about King Alfred's character and life, and presents far more information about Alfred than is known about any other early English ruler. Asser (d. 908/909) was a Welsh monk, who became Bishop of Sherborne in the 890s. At King Alfred's request, Asser joined the court, renowned for its circle of scholars including Grimbald and John the Old Saxon, and helped the king in his translation of Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Care*.⁶²

There are early biographical materials appertaining to three of the eleventh-century kings of England. The *Encomium Emmae Reginae* (In Praise of Queen

⁶⁰ Lewis Thorpe, ed. and trans., *Einhard and Notker the Stammerer: Two Lives of Charlemagne* (Harmondsworth, 1969).

⁶¹ Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and other contemporary sources* (Harmondsworth, 1983).

⁶² Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, *Alfred the Great*, pp. 26–27.

Emma) was commissioned by Queen Emma, wife of King Æthelred the Unready 1002-16 and wife of King Cnut 1017-35, and probably started about 1040 when Emma was still in exile in Flanders. It was written in Latin probably by a monk from the monastery of Saint- Bertin, at Saint-Omer, in Flanders. It gives a valuable insight into the Danish conquest of England and especially politics in the period following the death of Cnut (1035-40).

The *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, written as a panegyric of King Cnut and presenting the king more as a politician than a military hero, clearly supports the interests of Emma in the court during the reign of their son King Harthacnut (1037-42).⁶³ For instance, Emma's marriage to Cnut is praised, while her first marriage to the English king Æthelred II is cautiously underplayed to the point that her children by Æthelred II—Edward the Confessor and Alfred—are portrayed as Cnut's offspring. Cnut's son by Ælfgifu of Northampton, Harold Harefoot, by contrast, is not only ignored as his son and successor but also blamed for the murder of Alfred, whereas Emma is freed of any responsibility. In sharp contrast to the tensions between Emma and Edward the text skilfully presents a picture of a legitimate and powerful Anglo-Danish dynasty, in which Harthacnut and his half-brother Edward the Confessor rule together in harmony, joined by their mother Emma.⁶⁴

⁶³ A. Campbell, ed., *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, Camden 3rd ser. 72 (1949) rep. with supplementary introduction by S. Keynes, Camden Classic Reprints 4 (1998). Extracts in *EHD* no. 28; The *Encomium Emmae* was written in praise of Queen Emma by a monk of St Omer, probably influenced by the *Norman History of Dudo of St Quentin* see Eric Christiansen, *Dudo of St Quentin, History of the Normans* (Woodbridge, 1998).

⁶⁴ In reality Emma's position in the court was far from secure in the period 1041-2. In 1043, when he ruled by himself, Edward deprived his mother of both land and treasure because, in the words of the *ASE*, 'she was earlier too harsh with the king, her son, in that she did less for him that he wanted, before he was king, and also afterwards'.

The *Vita Edwardi Regis* (Life of King Edward), a historical work completed by an anonymous author in c.1067, was commissioned by Queen Edith, daughter of Earl Godwine and wife of King Edward the Confessor.⁶⁵ The first part of the *Vita Edwardi Regis* focuses on the decades before the Norman Conquest in 1066 and the activities of the family of Godwin, Earl of Wessex, while the second part takes a hagiographical tone in eulogising the holiness of King Edward the Confessor. Like Queen Emma in the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, Queen Edith seems actively involved in the writing of the *Vita Edwardi Regis*. The work is in effect an encomium of Edward since it portrays the Godwin family involved in Alfred's death and therefore answerable for the discord between Godwin, the earl of Wessex, and the king.

For an insight into the life of the clergy, especially in the life of saints and their relationship with Anglo-Saxon monarchy, the Anonymous (Lindisfarne) *Life of St Cuthbert*, written c.698 -705 and Bede's *Two Lives of St Cuthbert* represent significant sources. Bede's *Two Lives*, Metrical and Prose c.721, are based on the Anonymous life but with certain deviations and additions.⁶⁶

Some of the most important compilations come from the church at Durham. The *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* (History of St Cuthbert) c.1050 is a cartulary chronicle of grants and losses of property as well as miracles of retribution. It records the history of St Cuthbert and his church—based first at Lindisfarne and then moving to Norham, Chester-le-Street and finally Durham—up to the middle

⁶⁵ Frank Barlow, ed. and trans., *The Life of King Edward the Confessor who rests at Westminster* (Oxford, 1992). The most likely candidates for the authorship of the *Vita* are Goscelin and Folcard, monks of St Bertin Abbey in St Omer.

⁶⁶ Bertram Colgrave, ed., *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: a Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life* (Cambridge, 1940); Bede's *Metrical Life* of St Cuthbert was written after the Anonymous *Life*, but before 705, and his *Prose Life* of St Cuthbert written c.720.

of the tenth century, with an addendum taking it up to the mid-eleventh century.⁶⁷ Its version of events has been composed and tailored to present Durham in an assertive and eminent position.

The *Chronica Monasterii Dunelmensis*, written by a member of the congregation of St Cuthbert between 1072 and 1083, provides valuable information on the pre-Benedictine Community's relations with the Anglo-Saxon, Danish and Norman kings.⁶⁸

The lives of Dunstan, Æthelwold and Oswald, written between 995 and 1005, reflect the history and the ecclesiastical politics of the mid-tenth century and provide a further understanding of the nature of Anglo-Saxon kingship. For example, B's *Vita Dunstani*, offers detailed information about the reign of King Æthelstan's successors, Edmund, Eadred and Eadwig, that is, the years 939-59.⁶⁹

The earliest surviving *Vita Dunstani* (Life of St Dunstan) written c.995-1005 by an unknown author, known as 'B.', was dedicated to Archbishop Ælfric.⁷⁰ In great detail, it covers Dunstan's life up to his appointment to the bishoprics of Worcester and London and the archbishopric of Canterbury and it also records various visions and miracles of his youth.⁷¹ It is the only surviving *Vita* to be based

⁶⁷ The *Historia* is influenced by the Anonymous *Life of St Cuthbert*, Bede's prose *Life of St Cuthbert*, and Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*. See Ted Johnson South, ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of Saint Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony* (Woodbridge, 2002).

⁶⁸ *Chronica Monasterii Dunelmensis*, in H. H. H. Craster, 'The Red Book of Durham', *EHR*, xl (1925).

⁶⁹ William Stubbs, *Memorials of Saint Dunstan*, RS, 63, chs 13-26 (London, 1874).

⁷⁰ The author gives only the first letter of his name (B.) and introduces himself as 'the most foreign of all priests and worthless native of the Saxon race'. See Michael Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon literature 900-1066*, vol. 2 (London, 1993), pp. 279-280; W. Stubbs, *Memorials of Saint Dunstan*, pp. 3-52. Dunstan (909 – 19 May 988) was an Abbot of Glastonbury Abbey, a Bishop of Worcester, a Bishop of London, and an Archbishop of Canterbury. He played a very important role in tenth-century ecclesiastical politics and was later canonised as a saint.

⁷¹ B's *Vita* highlights Dunstan's appointment to the abbacy of Glastonbury c. 940 x 946, noting that the saint was born near Glastonbury and was later educated in the church. Emphasis is also placed

on personal recollections of the saint, who is presented here not as a kind and gentle ecclesiastic but as a rather difficult and tormented personality. On the other hand, Osbern of Canterbury in his *Vita Sancti Dunstani* and *Liber Miraculorum Sancti Dunstani*, written in 1070, presents the artistic side of the saint, saying that he was skilled in 'making a picture and forming letters'.⁷²

Wulfstan's *Vita S. Æthelwoldi* was written c.1000, soon after the translation of St Æthelwold on 10 September 996.⁷³ It is an account of the life and miracles of St Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester and one of the most important leaders of the monastic reform. Wulfstan was Cantor of Winchester and his *Vita* bears similarities with Ælfric's *Vita Sancti Æthelwoldi*, written c.1005 and dedicated to Cenwulf, bishop of Winchester.⁷⁴

The *Vita Sancti Oswaldi*, bishop of Worcester and later archbishop of York, was written in Latin by Byrhtferth of Ramsey (c.970-c.1020), priest and monk of Ramsey Abbey.⁷⁵ Byrhtferth's *Vita* was constructed skilfully to promote the cult of his patron and to protect Ramsey's interests. Similar to B's *Vita Dunstani*, the *Vita Sancti Oswaldi* was based on personal reminiscences of the saint and the period he lived in.

in Dunstan's studies and the books the saint was reading amidst the very active religious community of Glastonbury. See Michael Winterbottom and Michael Lapidge, eds., *The Early Lives of St Dunstan*, OMT (Oxford, 2011).

⁷² Osbern, *Vita Sancti Dunstani*, William Stubbs, ed., *Memorials of Saint Dunstan*, RS 53, 2 vols (London, 1874), pp. 69-128.

⁷³ Wulfstan of Winchester, *Vita S. Æthelwoldi: The Life of St. Æthelwold*, eds., M. Lapidge, and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1991).

⁷⁴ Wulfstan, *Vita S. Æthelwoldi*, eds. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom, pp. 17-29. See EHD, no. 235.

⁷⁵ Byrhtferth had studied with Abbo of Fleury and was invited to Ramsey Abbey by Oswald, Bishop of Worcester (961-92) to teach. See Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgbwine*, ed. Michael Lapidge (Oxford, 2008).

The crucial document of the tenth-century monastic reform movement under King Edgar was the *Regularis Concordia Anglica Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque* (The Monastic Agreement of the Monks and Nuns of the English Nation).⁷⁶ Probably compiled by Æthelwold at Winchester in about 970, the *Regularis Concordia* is a code of monastic law based on the ideals of the Benedictine Order on the Continent. The Benedictine reform in England was closely associated with the names of the three eminent ecclesiastics, Dunstan, Ethelwold, and Oswald. The document regulates the daily life of a restored English monasticism, especially the details of its liturgical observances.

Wulfstan's *Institutes of Polity*, written c.1020, is an important tract on political thought and presents a valuable insight into Anglo-Saxon kingship and the role of bishops and reeves.⁷⁷

The homilies of the period, especially the homilies of Wulfstan and Ælfric, give a clear picture of the theological and political ideas of the period and the way prominent prelates communicated them to their congregation.⁷⁸ For instance, in one of his homilies, the renowned *Sermo ad Anglos*, Wulfstan harshly criticises the

⁷⁶ MSS: BL Cotton Faustina B. iii and BL Cotton Tiberius A. iii, described by Neil R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), nos. 155 and 186; Dom T. Symons, ed. and trans., *Regularis Concordia Anglica Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque: The Monastic Agreement of the Monks and Nuns of the English Nation* (London, 1953). The Proem to the *Regularis Concordia* gives an account of how King Edgar 'commanded a Synodal Council to be held at Winchester', and how he sent a letter to the assembly in which 'he urged all to be of one mind as regards monastic usage'

⁷⁷ *Die Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical: ein werk Erzbischof Wulfstans von York*. Karl Jost, ed., (Bern, 1959).

⁷⁸ Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., *Homilies of Ælfric*, 2 vols (London, 1844).

corrupt state of the nation towards the end of the reign of King Æthelred the Unready.⁷⁹

Each of the two series of the *Homilies of Ælfric* consists of forty sermons which cover the chief events of the Christian year.⁸⁰ Of great importance in the homilies is Ælfric's conscious effort to instruct the congregation in the rudiments of basic theology and to familiarise the clergy and the laity, with the writings of the Fathers of the Church, particularly those of Augustine of Hippo and Gregory the Great.⁸¹ This, of course, not only expresses a basic need in Anglo-Saxon society but also confirms the power of oral tradition and shows the way literacy became equally accessible to those with no literary skills, and little or no knowledge of Latin. Ælfric's methodical attitude in delivering the philosophy of eminent Christian authors suggests his confidence in the efficacy of this form of teaching.

Ælfric's *Letter to the Monks of Eynsham*, written in Latin c.1005, is an account of the monastic life in the community.⁸² Recording in detail the daily and seasonal round of prayer and other duties of his fellow monks, Ælfric of Eynsham

⁷⁹ Wulfstan was bishop of London (996-1002), archbishop of York (1002-23) and bishop of Worcester (1002-16), see *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, ed. Dorothy Whitelock, (London, 1939). See also *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, ed. Dorothy Bethurum (Oxford, 1957), pp. 255-275.

⁸⁰ Both of the series have a Latin preface addressed to Sigeric, archbishop of Canterbury. However, the sermons of the first are simple, doctrinal and instructive, while the sermons of the second series are historical, more expansive and have an elaborate narrative. The tenth-century monk Ælfric of Eynsham (c.955-1010), known also as Ælfric the Grammarian, Ælfric of Cerne and Ælfric the Homilist, was the most erudite and prolific writer in Old English, hagiography homilies and biblical commentaries. Ælfric was responsible for the preface to Genesis of the Old English Hexateuch and of its translations. He was educated in the Benedictine Old Minster of Winchester under Æthelwold who was bishop in Winchester from 963 to 948. See *The Homilies of Ælfric*, ed. and trans., Benjamin Thorpe, 2 vols (London, 1844-6); extracts in *EHD*, no. 239.

⁸¹ The Latin preface to the first series of homilies enumerates some of Ælfric's authorities, the chief of whom was Gregory the Great. Other main sources of Ælfric's sermons are the works of St Jerome, Bede, Smaragdus Haymo, along with additional sources of Alcuin, Gregory of Tours and Rufinus, the *Vitae Patrum* of Ratramnus.

⁸² Christopher A. Jones, ed. and trans., *Ælfric, Letter to the Monks of Eynsham*, CSASE 24 (Cambridge, 1998).

(Oxfordshire) offers a valuable insight into the life and duties of an ordinary Anglo-Saxon monk.

Anglo-Norman chroniclers of the twelfth century wrote about the late Anglo-Saxon period and their work influenced the formation of the English historical tradition. The work of writers such as Symeon of Durham, William of Malmesbury, John of Worcester and Henry of Huntingdon is also considered here since it provides valuable information about twelfth century perceptions of—and adaptation—to the Anglo-Saxon past. Occasionally twelfth century sources provide information beyond that given by surviving Anglo-Saxon primary sources. For instance, William of Malmesbury in his *Gesta regum Anglorum* (Deeds of the kings of the English) gives material that is not mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Furthermore, it contains two quotations and an extract derived from a tenth-century panegyric of Æthelstan, now lost, which is otherwise unknown.

The *Historia regum Anglorum et Dacorum* (History of the Kings) written in 1129 by Symeon of Durham, the precentor of Durham Cathedral, is a historical compilation, partly based on northern materials, beginning at the point where Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* ends.⁸³

Another work written by Symeon of Durham in the early twelfth-century is the *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu istius, hoc est Dunelmensis, Ecclesiae* (Tract on the Origins and Progress of this the Church of Durham), which presents the history of the community of Durham from its beginning to the year 1096.⁸⁴

⁸³ Thomas Arnold, ed., Symeon of Durham, *Historia regum Anglorum: Symeonis monachi opera Omnia*, RS 75, vol. 2 (London, 1882-85; reprint, 1965).

⁸⁴ The historical compilation known also as the *Historia Dunelmensis Ecclesiae* (History of the Church of Durham) records the opening of the tomb of St Cuthbert for his translation into the new cathedral of Durham, 29 August 1104. See David Rollanson, ed., *Symeon of Durham. Libellus de*

According to the *Libellus's* preface, the work was commissioned by the monastic leadership of Durham Priory; probably Prior Turgot. In order to promote the Church of Durham, the *Libellus*, like *The Historia Sancto Cuthberto*, is tightly structured around the constant presence and miracles of the community patron St Cuthbert.⁸⁵ By relating the history of bishopric and church of Durham and its predecessors at Lindisfarne and Chester-le-Street, the *Libellus*, again like the eleventh-century *Historia Sancto Cuthberto*, demonstrates the historical continuity of Durham.

Attributed to Florence or John of Worcester, the twelfth-century Latin world chronicle, *Chronicon ex chronicis* (The Chronicle of John of Worcester) begins with the Creation and ends in 1140.⁸⁶ Based on the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, but with some additional material, it gives an account of the Danish kings and provides the main narrative account of the reign of King Cnut. Of great interest is the letter that Cnut sent to the English people after his pilgrimage to Rome, which is included in the description of the events in the year 1031.⁸⁷ The story of King Cnut

Exordio atque Procursu istius, hoc est Dunelmensis, Ecclesiae (Tract on the Origins and Progress of this the Church of Durham) (Oxford, 2000).

⁸⁵ The miracles worked in Cuthbert's name during the late Anglo-Saxon period were quite extravagant and the *Libellus* contains thrilling accounts of some of these, such as the miracle of the three waves in which Cuthbert turned part of the Irish Sea into blood because he did not want to have his relics taken out of England by his followers (*Libellus* ii.11), or the miracle of the foundation of Durham, in which the cart transporting Cuthbert's body across England refused to move signalling the saint's desire to remain at Durham (*Libellus* iii.1). See David Rollanson, ed., *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu istius, hoc est Dunelmensis, Ecclesie* (Oxford, 2000).

⁸⁶ Florence of Worcester (died 1118), known in Latin as Florentius, was a monk of Worcester, who played some part in the production of the *Chronicon ex chronicis*.

⁸⁷ See *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, eds. R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk, trans., Jennifer Bray and P. McGurk, II (Oxford, 1995).

commanding the incoming tide to stop, without success, is first told by Henry of Huntingdon in the *Historia Anglorum* (The History of the English People).⁸⁸

The twelfth-century English chronicle *Liber Eliensis* (Book of Ely) was written in Latin by a monk of Ely monastery.⁸⁹ Based on earlier historical compilations, it presents local and ecclesiastical history, incorporating documents and stories of saints' lives covering the period from the founding of the abbey in 673 until the middle of the twelfth century.⁹⁰ In order to exalt the position of Ely monastery and increase donations to it, the *Liber Eliensis* highlights the miracles worked by its patron saint, Æthelthryth, the gifts of land and the distinguished burials that took place at the abbey.⁹¹

The chronicle gives a lively glimpse into King Edgar's rule and a better understanding of the discreet and efficacious relationship between generous royal donations and the deliverance of miracles.⁹² The stories regarding miracles often say that those who asked for cures or miracles similar to those in the *Liber Eliensis* would have to visit the monastery where they could make a donation.⁹³ This miracle award system to generous donors following their gifts of land to the religious house also features in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*. Undoubtedly, the

⁸⁸ Henry of Huntingdon (c.1088–1157), the son of a canon in the diocese of Lincoln, was a twelfth-century English historian, who served as archdeacon of Huntingdon. See *Henry Archdeacon of Huntingdon, Historia Anglorum, The History of the English People 1000–1154*, ed. and trans., Diana E. Greenway (Oxford, 2002).

⁸⁹ E. O. Blake, ed., *Liber Eliensis*, Camden Third Series (London, 1962).

⁹⁰ The first book also deals with the history of the abbey and its abbesses until the Danish invasions the ninth century.

⁹¹ The *Liber Eliensis* stresses the burials of Æthelstan, a Bishop of Elmham, that of Ælfwine, another Bishop of Elmham, and Wulfstan II, an Archbishop of York, in an attempt to encourage donations by those who wanted to secure a place of burial in the monastery.

⁹² The first and second books give an account of Edgar's rule and the restoration of the Ely monastery, after the Viking attacks, under King Edgar and Bishop Æthelwold. Many of the gifts to the abbey church are described, such as the altar cloth donated by Queen Emma.

⁹³ An important part of the work was devoted to the miracles of St Æthelthryth.

efficacy of miracles proved a very powerful strategy for acquisition of land, a major concern of medieval monasteries, as it increased the numbers of pilgrims and encouraged royal patronage.

William of Malmesbury, the twelfth-century chronicler, provides information beyond that given by the various versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.⁹⁴ Completed in 1125, his *Gesta regum Anglorum* (Deeds of the kings of the English) spanned the period A.D. 449 to 1120 and was modelled on Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*.⁹⁵

In the *Gesta pontificum Anglorum* (Deeds of the English Bishops) William of Malmesbury gives the history of abbeys and bishoprics and accounts of the lives of English prelates and saints, focusing especially on Aldhelm, abbot of Malmesbury.⁹⁶ The compilation spans from Augustine's arrival in Canterbury in 597 up to the 1120s when the work was being composed. William of Malmesbury wrote also the *Vita S. Dunstani* c.1120 and the *Life of St Wulfstan* based on a vernacular *Life* by Coleman.⁹⁷

The Annales Monasterii de Wintonia, compiled c.1200 and attributed to Richard of Devizes, begin in 519 and extend beyond the Norman Conquest in 1066.⁹⁸ The Annals present a view from Winchester, in the twelfth century, of

⁹⁴ William was born c.1095 near Malmesbury in Wiltshire. When he was a boy he entered the monastery at Malmesbury where later became a monk.

⁹⁵ William of Malmesbury in the preface of his *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, expresses his admiration for Bede. See William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings* I, eds. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1998).

⁹⁶ William of Malmesbury, *The Deeds of the Bishops of England* (*Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*), trans., David Preest (Woodbridge, 2002).

⁹⁷ William of Malmesbury, *Vita sancti Dunstani*, ed. and trans., Bernard J. Muir and Andrew J. Turner. William of Malmesbury: *Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract* (Oxford, 2002). See also William of Malmesbury, *Vita Sancti Dunstani*, ed. William Stubbs, *Memorials of St Dunstan*, RS 53, 2 vols (London, 1874).

⁹⁸ Richard of Devizes was a twelfth-century English chronicler, a monk of St Swithin's house at Winchester see Henry R. Luard, ed., *Annales Monasterii de Wintonia, 518–1277*, RS 36, vol. 2 (London, 1864–9): 1–125.

events in earlier English history such as the treatment of Ecgberht, Æthelwulf, Alfred, Edgar, Earl Godwine, and the trial of Queen Emma.

CHAPTER 1: The prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*

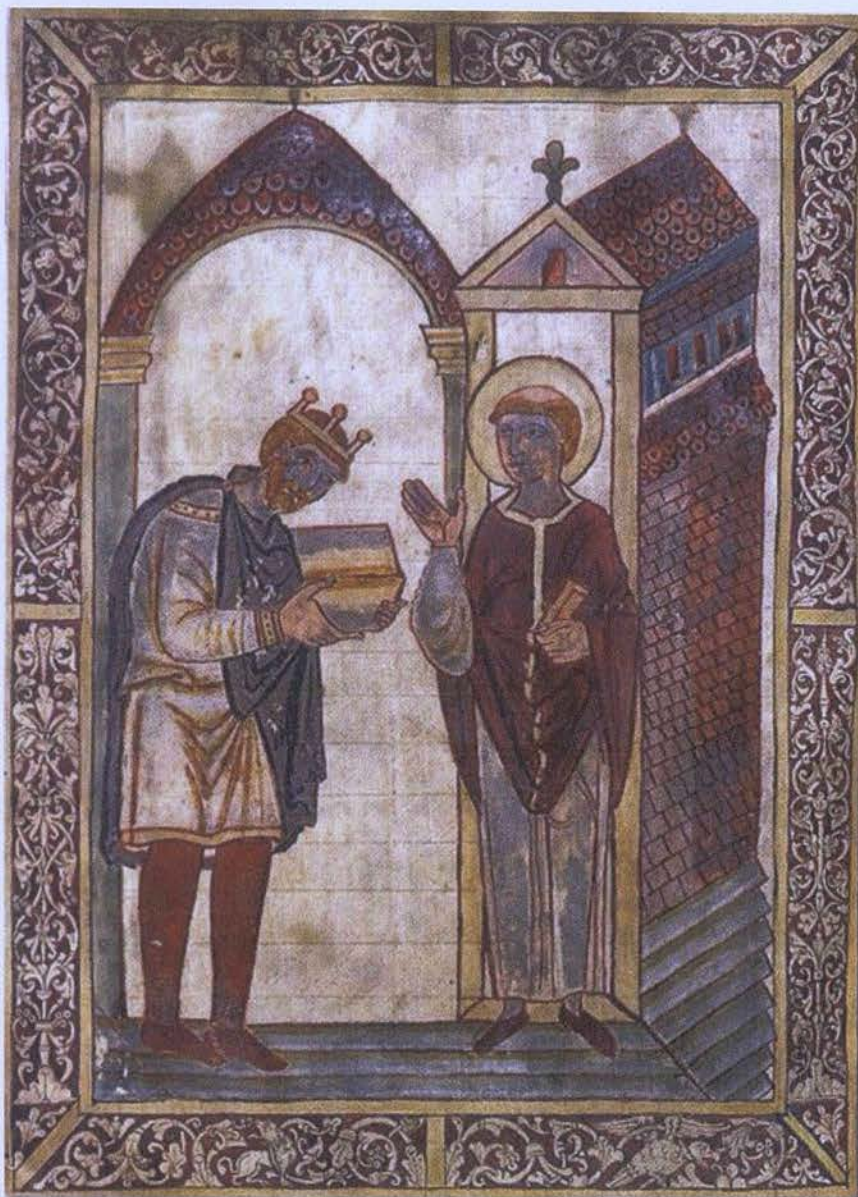


Fig. 1 King Æthelstan with the book and St Cuthbert, *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*

c.934-9, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library, MS 183, fol. 1v

1.1 Basileus Totius Britanniae

This section examines the iconography of the full-page, framed prefatory miniature from Bede's *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, c. 934-9 (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library, fol. 1v) with the aim of reconstructing the original context of the miniature and defining the structure of Anglo-Saxon kingship in relation to the theological ideas of the period (figs. 1-3).⁹⁹ The iconographical analysis evaluates the structural and visual components of the composition and the way in which they correlate to one another.

In the prefatory miniature King Æthelstan holding an open book in his hands is bowing before St Cuthbert in front of a monastic foundation (fig. 1). The saint stands holding a small closed book in his left hand and has his raised right hand open in a gesture of greeting or blessing. The figures are not identified by inscriptions and the scene has no witnesses.¹⁰⁰ The prefatory miniature in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* is especially important since it is the oldest surviving depiction of an Anglo-Saxon monarch, King Æthelstan, grandson of King Alfred the Great.

Focusing on the figures of King Æthelstan and Saint Cuthbert and assessing the theological ideas of the period the study examines the relationship between secular and divine authorities and their pivotal role in the formation of Anglo-Saxon kingship. In search of possible iconographic models, the iconographical analysis addresses parallel compositions in Carolingian, Anglo-

⁹⁹ See Budny, Mildred. 1977. *Insular, Anglo-Saxon, and Early Anglo-Norman Manuscript Art at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 161-185.

DescriptionURL:http://parkerweb.stanford.edu/parker/actions/manuscript_description_long_display.do?ms_no=183

ImageURL:http://parkerweb.stanford.edu/parker/actions/page.do?forward=page_turner&ms_no=183

¹⁰⁰ On the identification of the figures, see Introduction, pp. 14-16.

Saxon and Ottonian manuscript illumination. The comparison carried out here is further reinforced by the assessment of textual sources contemporary to the manuscript, as well as later ones.

Bearing emblems of secular and spiritual power on their heads, the crown and the halo respectively, the tenth-century Anglo-Saxon king, Æthelstan, and the seventh-century saint, Cuthbert, stand next to one another at the top of a staircase in front of a monastic foundation. The architectural setting is designed to emphasise the status of the figures since the crowned, bearded king stands under an imposing arch with a tiled dome and the nimbed, tonsured, clean-shaven saint at the entrance of a monastic church with clerestory windows and a tiled roof.¹⁰¹ Most likely, the church refers to the monastic community of St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street, where King Æthelstan, according to the *Historia Sancto Cuthberto*, visited the shrine of the saint when he was leading his army to Scotland in 934.¹⁰²

The three-pronged crown, the lavish short Anglo-Saxon tunic, elaborately ornamented at the cuff and neckline, the red hose and the fine purple cloak fastened with a brooch on the right shoulder, show Æthelstan's royal background and contrast with the austere monastic vestments of the saint. Dressed in a chasuble worn over an alb, St Cuthbert holds a small closed book in his left hand and his right hand is raised pointing towards the king.

¹⁰¹ Similar settings feature in Anglo-Saxon art. For instance, in the Old English Hexateuch there are similar meeting scenes settings outside buildings. The prefatory miniature in the *Vitae Sancto Cuthberti* is visually cut into two sections. On the left, there is the monumental entrance with the king and, on the right, the church with the saint. While the actual frame encloses both figures, the buildings in the composition act as two distinct frames.

¹⁰² HSC ch. 26, see Ted Johnson South, ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of St Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony* (Woodbridge, 2002); ASC 934 (933 A), 'In this year King Æthelstan went into Scotland with both a land force and a naval force, and ravaged much of it'. See Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents* (London, 1965).

The robust figures of the king and the saint are drawn with large heads and strong hands. Stylistically, St Cuthbert is similar to the figures of Pope Sixtus, and Peter, St Gregory's deacon, on the maniple of St Cuthbert's embroideries dating from the second half of the seventh century (fig. 26). Facial similarities with St Cuthbert can also be seen in the figure of the ninth-century Winchester fresco fragment excavated from the foundations of the New Minster (fig. 29). Wormald has pointed out that the fresco fragment is the earliest example of the style developed in St Cuthbert's embroideries and the *Æthelstan Psalter* (BL, Cotton MS Galba A. xviii. fol. 2v), an early ninth-century Carolingian book, perhaps made in Liege, which was in England by the early tenth century (fig. 52, 53).¹⁰³

In sharp contrast with the plain style of its composition, the miniature in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* has a lush frame divided into eight richly foliated panels, two of which feature a bird. The rich foliage of the frame varies from panel to panel; it resembles a subdued version of the exuberant foliage in the frame of the New Minster Charter prefatory miniature, produced in Winchester in the tenth century. In both cases these lavishly ornamented frames probably reflect the high status of the secular, sacred and divine figures they surround.

In the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* the foliated panel below the king features a lion with open mouth, its head aggressively turned to the left, whereas the panel below the saint shows a predatory bird, probably an eagle, with open beak and spread

¹⁰³ Francis Wormald, 'Anniversary Address', *The Antiquaries Journal* 47:2 (London, 1967), pp. 162-65; Martin Biddle, 'Excavations at Winchester 1966', *Antiquaries Journal* 47 (London, 1967), pp. 277-79; Wormald, 'Winchester School', 307 f., pl. VI, a; See also, Robert Deshman, 'Anglo-Saxon Art after Alfred', *The Art Bulletin* 56 (1974), p. 195; Margaret J. Rickert, *Painting in Britain* (London, 1954), p. 30. For the *Æthelstan's Psalter* see Simon Keynes, 'Æthelstan's Books', in Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss, eds., *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 193-196; Robert Deshman, 'The Galba Psalter: pictures, texts and context in an early medieval prayerbook', *ASE* 26 (1977), pp. 109-138.

wings, facing in the opposite direction. Another predatory bird with open beak is depicted on the panel next to the king's head. Most likely the presence of the lion and the eagle are related respectively to the figures of the king and the saint above, reflecting their power, high status, and achievements. Likewise, they may also have liturgical and apocalyptic overtones.

The lion has been interpreted as a symbol of the triumphant resurrected Christ and the eagle, flying to the throne of God for inspiration, as the ascended Christ of the Second Coming.¹⁰⁴ According to Anna Gannon the depiction of eagles on Roman insignia and coins probably served as prototypes for the symbol of St Mark in the Book of Durrow. Birds in vine-scrolls have also been interpreted as representing human souls, referring to salvation and Paradise and having apotropaic overtones.

St Cuthbert was particularly close to St John's gospel. John of Salisbury says that St Cuthbert cured a man by laying St John's gospel on him.¹⁰⁵ St Cuthbert's gospel produced in the late seventh century and interred in the saint's coffin at Lindisfarne Priory in 698 is a copy of St John's gospel (fig. 28a). Accordingly the presence of an eagle in the lower frame in the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* may reflect the close relationship between the saint and the gospel of St John with the symbol of the eagle. The presence of a similar bird next to King Æthelstan probably suggests the close relationship between the king and the saint and has salvation overtones.

¹⁰⁴ Michelle Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe* (London, 2003), pp. 366-370; Michelle P. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels and the Early Medieval World*, (London, 2011), pp. 114-116.

¹⁰⁵ Michelle Brown, "'In the Beginning was the Word': books and faith in the age of Bede", pp. 11-12.

Lions are also depicted on the coinage of later Northumbrian kings. 'Heraldic lions', with elongated open jaws, long paws, and triple-tufted tail feature on coins from East Anglia. Oriental prototypes can be detected on some of the lions drawn with lolling tongue. The presence of lions is related to Christ, as the Lion of Juda, and also to apocalyptic scenes.¹⁰⁶

Francis Wormald has stressed the similarities between the symmetrical foliage of the tree-scroll in the frame of the miniature in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* and the initials of the Junius Psalter, written in the ninth century probably at Winchester (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 27, S.C.5139), an approximately contemporary Winchester product.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, the foliage in the lower panels of the frame next to King Æthelstan and St Cuthbert respectively is very similar to 'the tree' motifs in the small maniple of St Cuthbert's embroideries (fig. 26).¹⁰⁸ An earlier version of the tree-scroll foliage in the frame of the prefatory miniature can also be detected in the design on the back of the late ninth-century Alfred Jewel (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum) commissioned by King Alfred (fig. 54).¹⁰⁹ The stylistic similarities of the prefatory miniature with the royal commissions from Winchester show that the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* was probably also a product of the Winchester scriptorium.

¹⁰⁶ Anna Gannon, pp. 117-120.

¹⁰⁷ Wormald, 'Winchester School', 307 f., pl. VI; Francis Wormald, 'Anniversary Address', *The Antiquaries Journal* 47:2 (London, 1967), pp. 162-65, pls. xxiii, liv; Sarah Foot, *Æthelstan: The First King of England*, (London, 2011), pp. 122-123.

¹⁰⁸ R. Freyhan, 'The Place of the Stole and Maniple in Anglo-Saxon Art of the Tenth Century', in C. F. Battiscombe, ed., *The Relics of St Cuthbert* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 409-32. Freyhan in *Relics*, 413f., pls. xxxi, 3; xxxii.

¹⁰⁹ The inscription on the jewel reads 'AELFRED MEC HEHT GEWYRCAN' ('Alfred had me made'). The sophisticated workmanship suggests that the Alfred on the inscription was the Anglo-Saxon king (871-899).

1.1.1 Æthelstan Rex

King Æthelstan, eldest son of King Edward the Elder and grandson of King Alfred the Great, was born in Wessex but was raised at the Mercian court by his aunt Æthelflaed and his uncle Ethelred.¹¹⁰ His step-mother, Ælfflaed, was the second wife of King Edward the Elder. According to the tradition, as a child, Æthelstan was considered the ultimate heir to Wessex since King Alfred had invested him with a scarlet cloak, a belt set with gems and a 'Saxon' sword with a golden hilt.¹¹¹

The *Historia* tells us that, before King Edward the Elder died, 'he summoned his son Æthelstan, handed his kingdom over to him, and diligently instructed [him] to love St Cuthbert and honour him above all saints.'¹¹² Accordingly, the depiction of King Æthelstan standing next to St Cuthbert in the prefatory miniature in *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* reflects the close relationship between the king and the saint, mentioned in the *Historia*.

King Æthelstan was crowned king at Kingston-on-Thames on the fourth of September 925 and was recognised as king in Wessex and, probably, Mercia. He was king of the Anglo-Saxons from 924/5 to 927 and of the English from 927 to

¹¹⁰ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings*, ed. Mynors et al. (Oxford, 1998), p. 133.

¹¹¹ Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1971), p. 339.

¹¹² Moreover King Edward revealed to Æthelstan how St Cuthbert 'had mercifully succoured his father King Alfred in Poverty and exile and how he had boldly aided him against all enemies, and in what way he had always very clearly come most promptly as his continual helper whenever there was need'. Later on, King Æthelstan, following his father's example, instructed his half-brother Edmund 'that if anything sinister should befall him on his expedition to return his body to St Cuthbert and commend it for presentation to God on the Day of Judgement.' See, Ted Johnson South, ed. *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 25.

939.¹¹³ His bravery is commemorated in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* with a poem which describes the king's victory at the famous Battle of Brunanburh in 937.¹¹⁴

King Æthelstan died on the twenty-seventh of October 939 at Gloucester and was buried at Malmesbury.¹¹⁵ His cousins Ælfwine and Æthelwine were killed at the battle of Brunanburh and were also buried there.¹¹⁶ It is not known why King Æthelstan preferred Malmesbury to Winchester since his father, King Edward the Elder, had founded Winchester and was buried there. However, there might have been political motives behind his decision. William of Malmesbury tells us that a plot against Æthelstan was organised in Winchester.¹¹⁷ Simon Keynes suggests that, after King Edward the Elder died, Winchester favoured Ælfweard, King Æthelstan's half-brother, as a successor to the throne.¹¹⁸ Alan Thacker also notes that New Minster in Winchester had always been favoured by

¹¹³ The ASC, under the year 925, mentions: 'This year King Edward died, and Æthelstan his son succeeded to the kingdom'. See J. A. Giles, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London, 1914) King Æthelstan may have ruled from August 924. His father King Edward the Elder (899-925) died on the 17th of July 924. His son Ælfweard, Æthelstan's half-brother, succeeded him but died within a month; According to the tradition, King Æthelstan's grandfather, King Alfred the Great (871-899), had invested young Æthelstan with a scarlet cloak, a belt with gems and a Saxon sword with a golden hilt. See Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1971), p. 339.

¹¹⁴ ASC, A. 937, 'This year King Æthelstan and Edmund his brother led a force to Brumby, and there fought against Anlaf; and, Christ helping, had the victory: and hey slew five kings and seven earls'. See J. A. Giles, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London, 1914).

¹¹⁵ The ASC places his death under the year 940: 'This year King Æthelstan died at Gloucester on the sixth before the Kalends of November, about forty-one years, except one day, after King Alfred died. And Edmund the etheling, his brother, succeeded to the kingdom, and he was then eighteen years of age: and King Æthelstan reigned fourteen years and ten weeks. Then was Wulfhelm archbishop in Kent.'

¹¹⁶ Catherine E. Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), p. 78, n. 137.

¹¹⁷ They were plotting to blind Æthelstan see William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed., R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomas, and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1998), pp. 222-3, 226-7.

¹¹⁸ Simon Keynes, 'King Æthelstan's Books', in M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss, eds., *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, (Cambridge, 1985), pp.186-7; Simon Keynes, ed., *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey Winchester*, EETF, 26 (Copenhagen, 1996), pp. 19-20.

Edward's family by his second wife Ælfflaed. Æthelstan, the son of Edward's first wife Ecgwynn, did not show any affection to the abbey.¹¹⁹

The only description of King Æthelstan's appearance comes from William of Malmesbury who mentions that the king was of average height with flaxen hair intermingled with golden threads.¹²⁰ However, the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, as well as King Æthelstan's coinage, gives a conventional image of an Anglo-Saxon king, not a lifelike depiction. Accordingly, in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, King Æthelstan, crowned, bearded, and dressed in lavish attire, looks very similar to King Edgar in the New Minster Charter (fig. 4) and King Cnut in the *Liber Vitae* (fig. 7). By contrast to the manuscript illumination, on his coinage King Æthelstan is depicted clean-shaven.

In his monetary legislation, King Æthelstan proclaimed a single currency and banned the striking of coins outside towns.¹²¹ The special laws which King Æthelstan issued to reform and protect the monetary system suggest its important role in consolidating royal supremacy. At Grately, King Æthelstan decreed the earliest surviving law related to the coinage.¹²² The monetary reforms at Grately, c. 925-935, show that the king's objective was to keep the coinage under strict royal

¹¹⁹ Alan Thacker, 'Dynastic Monasteries and Family Cults: Edward the Elder's Sainted Kindred', in *Edward the Elder 899-924*, ed. N.J. Higham and D. H. Hill (New York, 2001), pp. 253-255.

¹²⁰ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, p. 148. The ASC mentions King Æthelstan's death under the year 940: 'This year King Æthelstan died at Gloucester on the sixth before the Kalends of November, about forty-one years, except one day, after King Alfred died'.

¹²¹ King Æthelstan assigned the quota of moneymen for each mint as following: Canterbury 7 (king 4, archbishop 2, abbot 1); Rochester 3 (king 2, bishop 1); London 8, Winchester 6, Lewes 2, Hastings 1, Chichester 1, Southampton 2, Wareham 2, Exeter 2, Shaftesbury 2, and for each of the other burghs, 1. See George C. Brooke, *English Coins* (London, 1950), p. 56; King Æthelstan's Grately decrees: 'In Canterbury there shall be seven minters, four of them the king's, two the archbishop's, and one the abbot's. In Rochester, three, two of them the king's, and one the bishop's.' See Frederick L. Attenborough, *The laws of the earliest English kings* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 115.

¹²² George C. Brooke 1950, *English Coins*, p. 56; Anna Gannon, *The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage: sixth to eighth centuries* (Oxford, 2003) p. 17 n. 82, p. 189.

control with sale and purchase transactions under constant supervision. For example, it was also decreed that affairs of the borough such as trade or minting should come under the aegis of borough reeves, who had the duty to witness large scale transactions.¹²³

At Grately, King Æthelstan also ordered severe penalties for forgery, such as the loss of the hand of the counterfeiter.¹²⁴ Specifically, the king decreed that the counterfeiter's hand should be cut off and placed over his workshop.¹²⁵ And, as noted by Wormald, 'the severe penalty has echoes of Mosaic Law.'¹²⁶ Such strict measures show that King Æthelstan was trying hard to keep counterfeiters under control. The fact that, in the *Exeter Code*, King Æthelstan issued even harsher

¹²³ Patrick C. Wormald, 'Legislation as Legal Text' in *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1999) vol. I, p. 294.

¹²⁴ (Of thieves, 1): 'First: that no thief be spared, who may be taken hand-hæbbende, above twelve years, and above eight pence. And if any one so do, let him pay for the thief according to his wer, and let it not be the more settled for the thief, or that he clear himself thereby. But if he will defend himself, or flees away, then let him not be speared. If a thief be brought into prison: that he be forty days in prison, and let him be released thereout with 120 shillings, and let the kindred enter into borh for him that he evermore desist. And if after that he steal, let him pay for him according to his wer, or bring him again therein: and if any one stand up for him, let him pay for him according to his wer, as well to the king as to him to whom it lawfully belongs: and let every man of those there who stand by him pay to king 120 shilling as wite'. (Of exchange, 11): 'And let no man exchange any property without the witness of the reeve, or of the let him give thirty shillings, and let the landlord take possession of the exchange'. (Of moneyers, 15): 'Thirdly: that there be one money over all the king's dominion, and that no man mint except within port. And if the moneyer be guilty, let the hand be struck off that wrought the offense, and, be set up on the money-smithy but if it be an accusation, and he is willing to clear himself; then let him go to the hot-iron, and clear the hand therewith with which he is charged that fraud to have wrought. And if at the ordeal he should be guilty, let the like be done as here before ordained'.

¹²⁵ H. R. Loyn, 'Boroughs and Mints A.D. 900-1066', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies presented to F.M. Stenton on the occasion of his 80th birthday*, ed., R. H. M. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 126; P. Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1999), p. 307.

¹²⁶ Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law*, p. 307.

penalties against forgery proves that the measures decreed in Grately did not achieve much.¹²⁷

The first depiction of an Anglo-Saxon king with a crown appears on the obverse of King Æthelstan's coinage (figs. 183, 184). Parallel to the prefatory miniature in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* the king wears a draped cloak clasped with a brooch on his right shoulder.

Æthelstan is portrayed without a beard, with short hair and the bust facing to the right. In some of the coins the king wears a simple, metal-ring crown with three prongs ending in dots, similar to the one in the prefatory miniature.¹²⁸

Christopher Blunt suggests that this may be a diadem or an unusual crown, 'formed of a band with prongs, with a globule featuring at each end.'¹²⁹ The crown suggests the sacred aspect of kingship, the anointed king, who rules under divine grace.

On early Æthelstan coins, his title is *AETHELSTAN REX*. The same title, with some variations, also features in his charters. Changes can be traced on Æthelstan's coinage soon after the king invaded Northumbria and York and had the Scots and Welsh kings submit to him. Thus, from 931 onwards, we see the introduction of the crown and the exalted titles *Rex Totius Britanniae* (King of all England) and sometimes *Basileus Totius Britanniae* in the legend.¹³⁰ Thanks to Æthelstan's political ambition and great military achievements England was for the first time united under one ruler and this is reflected on the coinage with depictions of the king wearing a crown followed by the title *Rex Totius Britanniae*.

¹²⁷ According to the *Exeter Code*, all thieves should be executed along with their supporters see Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law*, p. 305: V as Pr.; V as 3:1, III As 3; IV as 6, 6:3, VI 1:1-3.

¹²⁸ Christopher Brooke, *The Saxon and Norman Kings* (London, 1963), p. 77.

¹²⁹ Christopher E. Blunt, 'The Coinage of Æthelstan 924-939: A Survey', *BNJ* 42 (1974), p. 47.

¹³⁰ Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 57.

Additionally, the use of the Byzantine title *basileus* in some of his coins—*Basileus Totius Britanniae*—indicates contacts with the Byzantine Empire and the possible influence of the image of the Byzantine emperor.¹³¹

Æthelstan's clean-shaven face and square, robust neck on the obverse of his coinage show the influence of Roman portraiture of soldiers (fig. 183, 184). There is no similarity between this profile and the head of the bearded King Æthelstan depicted in the prefatory miniature in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*. There, the king has a noble, pensive face closer to images of Marcus Aurelius, a philosopher type of Roman emperor, or of an Old Testament patriarch. However, both images share the same robustness and solidity in the treatment of volume, the same type of pronged crown and the same style of brooch on the right shoulder.

Exchange of artistic ideas between manuscript illumination and coinage are also traced in the legend of the obverse. A small cross on the right shoulder of the king signals the beginning of the circular legend, *Aethelstan Rex*. The legend ends on the left shoulder of the king with the last letter *x* of the title, *Rex*, fashioned in the form of a cross and symmetrically reflecting the cross on the right. The same iconographic device appears on the obverse of a coin from York mint.¹³² The legend, with the name of the king and the word *Totius*, starts with a small cross on the left shoulder of the king and ends on the right.

In both cases, the legend, enclosing the royal title, gives the impression of an inscribed halo over the king's head, reminiscent of St Benedict's inscribed halo in the Arundel Psalter, produced at Christ Church, Canterbury, c. 1012–23 (BL, MS Arundel 155, fol. 133) where the enthroned saint gives the Rule to the monks (fig.

¹³¹ Philip Whitting, 'The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons' in *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies Presented to Sir Frank Stenton*, ed., Michael R. H. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 34.

¹³² York came under the dominion of Æthelstan in 927 when Sihtric Gale, who had married Æthelstan's daughter in 926, died. See Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 57, pl. xvi, 17.

33).¹³³ The inscribed legend surrounding King Æthelstan's head like a halo suggests the sacred nature and divine origin of earthly kingship. Intended or not this iconographic detail establishes the Anglo-Saxon ruler as the earthly Christian king, representative of the Heavenly king.

The sign of the cross is equally dominant on the reverse of Æthelstan's coinage with a small encircled cross in the middle of the issue (fig.183, 184). Like in the obverse the cross here not only serves symbolic, apotropaic and decorative purposes but also acts as a punctuation mark separating the names of the moneyer and the mint. The strong presence of the cross on both sides of the issue and at the beginning and the end of the royal title asserts its status as symbol of Christianity and divine authority and suggests that earthly kingship is blessed by divine kingship.

The occurrence of the name of the moneyer and the mint on the reverse complies with the monetary measures enacted at Grately. The presence of both names on the issue increases the moneyer's responsibilities and evidently helps the king to trace cases of forgery. This practice also serves royal propaganda given that the number of mints and moneyers under king's authority suggest royal power and territorial expansion.

¹³³ Possible transmission of imagery from other mediums to coinage can also be seen in the stole and the maniple of St Cuthbert embroideries which bear a quatrefoil containing the *Agnus Dei* and the *Manus Dei* (Hand of God or Hand of Providence') respectively. See R. Freyhan, 'The Place of the stole and maniples in Anglo-Saxon art of the tenth century', in *The Relics of St Cuthbert*, ed., C. F. Battiscombe (Oxford, 1956), p. 411. During this period a rare type of the coinage of Edward the Elder (c.874-924) has for the first time the 'Hand of Providence' on the reverse between the letters of the moneyer's name. See George Brooke, *English Coins*, pp. 48-49, pl. xiv, 8. The *Manus Dei* appears again, in three variations, on the reverse of issues under Æthelred II (c.968-1016): *First Hand type* (c. 979-985), *Hand of Providence coming from clouds* (c. 985-991) and (figs. 188, 189), *Benediction Hand type* (c.991). King Æthelred makes also use of the *Agnus Dei* in his coinage (fig. 192).

Furthermore, the names of the king, moneyer, and the mint accompanied by the sign of the cross lend an apotropaic character to the issue.¹³⁴ The symbol of the cross places the king and the royal affairs under the protection of God and visually warns anyone against violating the king's law. In the *Tithe Ordinance* it is further stressed that the royal law is under the protection of God.¹³⁵ As Wormald noted, in the *Tithe Ordinance* King Æthelstan implied that if people did not pay their tenths they would have had the remaining nine parts confiscated.¹³⁶

King Æthelstan's quotations from Jacob and Moses imply that his law was influenced from the practice of tithing in the Old Testament.¹³⁷ Similarly, King Alfred's Law Code of 880 A.D. is based on Exodus, uses quotations from it, and

¹³⁴ Anna Gannon, *The Iconography of Anglo-Saxon coinage: Sixth to Eighth Centuries* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 8-9, 87-88, 137-38.

¹³⁵ 'I, Æthelstan king, with the counsel of Wulfhelm, archbishop, and of my other bishops, make know to the reeves at each burh, and beseech you, in God's name, and by all his saints, and also by my friendship, that you first of my own goods render the tithes both of livestock and of the year's earthly fruits, so that they may most rightly be either meted, or told, or weighed out; and let the bishops then do the like from their own goods, and my ealdormen and my reeves the same. And I will, that the bishop and the reeves command it to all those who ought to obey them, that it be done at the right term. Let us bear in mind how Jacob the patriarch spoke: "Decimas et hostias pacificas offeram tibi;" and how Moses spoke in God's law: "Decimas et primitias non tardabis offerre Domino." It is for us to think how awfully it is declared in the books: If we will not render the tithes to God, that he will take from us the nine parts when we least expect; and, moreover, we have the sin in addition thereto. And I will also that my reeves do, that there be given the churchscots and the soulscots at the places to which they rightly belong; and plow-alms yearly, on this condition; that they shall enjoy it at the holy places who are willing to serve their churches, and of God and of me are willing to deserve it: but let him who will not, forfeit the bounty, or again turn to right. Now you hear, says the king, what I give to God, and what you ought to fulfil by my oferhynes. And do you also so that you may give to me my own what you for me may acquire. I will not that you unjustly anywhere acquire aught for me; but I will grant to you your own justly, on this condition, that you yield to me mine; and shield both yourselves, and those whom you ought to exhort, against God's anger and against my oferhynes'. See R. P. Selborne, *Ancient Facts concerning Churches and Tithes* (London, 1892), p. 184-5.

¹³⁶ Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1999), p. 306.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 306

begins with 'The Lord said these words to Moses'.¹³⁸ This suggests that Æthelstan's law code was influenced by the legislative system of his grandfather, King Alfred. And it also shows, as it has already been stressed by Jesse Gellich, Benjamin Withers, and Judith McClure, that the Old Testament provided a model for kingship on which the Anglo-Saxons grew especially keen.¹³⁹ Claus Kauffman stresses that the Anglo-Saxons, more than any other society, embraced the Old Testament stories as part of their identity.¹⁴⁰ This spiritual affinity to the Old Testament can be traced not only in Anglo-Saxon law, but also in vernacular literature, in homilies, sermons, and saints' lives.¹⁴¹

1.1.2 'Lifelong Glory in Battle' ¹⁴²

In some coins King Æthelstan is depicted wearing a helmet. On the obverse of a coin that comes from York mint King Æthelstan appears with a helmet and

¹³⁸ Claus Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England*, p. 36; Micheline-Maurice Larès, *Bible et Civilisation Anglaise* (Brussels; Monreal, 1974), pp. 59-77; Patrick Wormald, 'Lex Scripta and Verbum Regis: Legislation and Germanic Kingship', in *Early Medieval Kingship*, ed. P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds, 1977), pp. 105-38, esp. pp. 115 f., and 130-2.

¹³⁹ Gellich suggested that the medieval reader sought a strong uninterrupted line between the past and the present, which emphasised the similarities and explained everything in the Old Testament as a prefiguration of the New Testament see Jesse M. Gellrich. *The Idea of the Book in the Middle Ages: Language Theory, Mythology, and Fiction* (Ithaca and London, 1985), p. 33; Withers suggested that the Anglo-Saxons consciously tried to draw parallels between themselves and the Israelites, God's favourite people see Benjamin Withers, 'Audience, Literacy and the Social Roles of Reading and viewing' in *The Illustrated Old English Hexateuch, Cotton Claudius B. iv: The Frontier of Seeing and Reading in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 2007), p. 167: 'But these similarities do illustrate, on a larger level, a defining aspect of Christian thought in the Middle Ages – a desire to understand the Old Testament past by recasting it in terms of contemporary conventions'; McClure has also highlighted the close relationship between the Anglo-Saxons and the Israelites see; Judith McClure, 'Bede's Old Testament Kings', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society*, ed. P. Wormald (Oxford, 1983).

¹⁴⁰ Claus M. Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550*, p. 36.

¹⁴¹ In *Beowulf* there is a remake of the Biblical Creation and Cain is presented as the cause of all evils. See David Wright, trans., *Beowulf: A Prose Translation*, (Harmondsworth, 1957).

¹⁴² ASC, A. 937, The Battle of Brunanburh. See Dorothy Whitelock, EHD, (London, 1955), p. 200.

the bust facing to the right.¹⁴³ Here the emphasis is placed on the military achievements of the king. The helmet stands as a reminder of the king as a great warrior, who took every chance presented to him to consolidate his realm. Such an occasion emerged in Northumbria, when one of King Æthelstan's sisters married Sihtric, King of the Northumbrians.¹⁴⁴ When Sihtric died, King Æthelstan seized the opportunity to invade and gain control of the kingdom of Northumbria, thus becoming the first English king to rule this area.¹⁴⁵

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* recounts how in 933 King Æthelstan went to Scotland 'as well with a land army as with a fleet, and ravaged a great part of it'.¹⁴⁶ Later, in 937, King Æthelstan with his young half-brother, Edmund, defeated the Scots at the famous Battle of Brunanburh.¹⁴⁷ Although the place of the battle is not known, the poem in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* exalts Æthelstan as a brave warrior, a pious Christian king and a great collector of manuscripts and relics: 'Here Æthelstan king, of earls the lord, of heroes the bracelet giver, and his brother eke,

¹⁴³ York came under the dominion of Æthelstan in 927 when Sihtric Gale, who had married Æthelstan's daughter in 926, died. See Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 57, pl. xvi, 17.

¹⁴⁴ ASC, 925: 'This year King Athelstan and Sithric king of the Nothhumbrians came together at Tamworth, on the third before the Kalends of February; and Æthelstan gave him his sister'; Olaf, the young son of King Æthelstan's sister with Sihtric, was accepted by the Nortumbrian Vikings as heir to the kingdom. His uncle Guthfrith, king of the Irish Norsemen, came from Dublin to support him when King Æthelstan invaded Northumbria. After King Æthelstan's victory, Olaf found refuge in Ireland and Guthfrith to the king of Scots. See Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, (London, 1971), p. 339.

¹⁴⁵ The ASC mentions under the year 926: 'This year fiery lights appeared in the north part of the heavens. And Sithric perished: and King Æthelstan obtained the kingdom of the North-humbrians. And he ruled all the kings who were in this island: first, Howel, king of the West-Welsh; and Constantine, king of the Scots; and Owen, king of the Monmouth people; and Aldred, son of Eaddulf, of Bambrough: and they confirmed the peace by pledge and by oaths, at the place which is called Eatmot, on the fourth the Ides of July; and they renounced all idolatry, and after that submitted to him in peace.'

¹⁴⁶ See ASC (A) 933. See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 200.

¹⁴⁷ In 934 Æthelstan led his army into Scotland. See ASC A. 934; In 937, the Scots allied with the Norse and invaded England but they were defeated by King Æthelstan at the Battle of Brunanburh in 937. In the ASC, the poem referring to the battle comes under the year 937.

Edmund etheling, lifelong glory in battle won with edges of swords near Brumby'.¹⁴⁸ The poem stresses the fate of the defeated enemy and the importance of the Battle of Brunanburh in the history of Britain:

The North-men departed in their nailed barks; bloody relic of darts, on roaring ocean o'er the deep water Dublin to seek, again Ireland, shamed in mind. So too the brothers, both together, king and etheling, their country sought, West-Saxons' land in the war exulting...Carnage greater has not been in this island ever yet of people slain, before this, by edges of swords, as books us say, old writers, since from that east hither, Angles and Saxons came to land, o'er the broad seas Britain sought, mighty war-smiths, the Welsh o'ecame, earls most bold, this earth obtained.

For the last twelve years of his reign, King Æthelstan enjoyed a strong realm, which included the English peoples of Wessex, Mercia and Northumbria; the Britons of Cornwall; the Anglo-Scandinavian population of the Danelaw; the Norsemen, Danes and Englishmen of the area around York.¹⁴⁹ Accordingly, the choice of the Byzantine title, *Basileus*, on some of his issues, suggests not only acquaintance with the traditions of the Byzantine Empire but also reflects the cosmopolitan character of Æthelstan's court.

This is not surprising if one considers that four of the king's half-sisters married into continental families, reinforcing not only Æthelstan's alliances with the royal families of France and Germany, but also encouraging a more

¹⁴⁸ ASC, 937, EHD, p. 200.

¹⁴⁹ Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1971), p. 356.

cosmopolitan tone in his court.¹⁵⁰ Indeed, the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* mentions Anglo-Saxon contacts with the Byzantine Empire, recording the fact that among the offerings that King Edmund during his visit to Chester-le-Street placed upon the holy body of St Cuthbert were two Greek palls.¹⁵¹

The multicultural character of Æthelstan's court was further reinforced by the presence of Hakon, the son of King Harald of Norway, and Louis, the son of his half-sister Eadgifu, since both children were fostered there.¹⁵² Foreign scholars and dignitaries also flocked to Æthelstan's court and one of the legendary visitors was Egill Skallagrimsson.¹⁵³ As a result, King Æthelstan had more continental contacts than any of his predecessors.

1.2 The King and the Saint

1.2.1 St Cuthbert and the Anglo-Saxon Kings

St Cuthbert, bishop of Lindisfarne, was born c.635 in Northumbria and died in 687 on the Farne islands. He favoured the ascetic life and was closely linked with the Northumbrian royal family and also with kings from the south of England. The *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* tells us that the West Saxon kings shared a special interest in Saint Cuthbert and his community. King Alfred was the initiator of Saint Cuthbert's popularity in the West Saxon dynasty. The miraculous intervention of the saint in King Alfred's favour during the battle against the

¹⁵⁰ Æthelstan's half-sister, Eadgifu, married to King Charles the Simple, Edith to Emperor Otto I, and Eadchild to Duke Hugh see Simon Keynes, 'King Æthelstan's Books', p. 148, n. 27.

¹⁵¹ HSC 28, see Ted Johnson South, ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of St Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony* (Woodbridge, 2002).

¹⁵² When King Charles was captured by his enemies, Eadgifu brought his son and heir Louis to be fostered in England until the Franks sued for his return in 936.

¹⁵³ J. Armitage Robinson, *The Times of Saint Dunstan* (Oxford, 1923), pp. 51-80.

Danes, at Edington, in the Somerset march of Athelney in 878 instigated the veneration of Saint Cuthbert among the kings of Wessex.¹⁵⁴

During the battle, St Cuthbert appeared in King Alfred's dream and promised the king that he and his sons would be victorious and blessed with his friendship: 'For henceforth I will be your shield and your friend and the defender of your sons'. And, further on:

.... be joyful and strong without fear, since God has delivered your enemies into your hands, and likewise all this land, and [established] hereditary rule for you and your sons and the sons of your sons. Be faithful to me and to my people, for all Albion has been given to you and your sons. Be just for you are chosen King of all Britain.¹⁵⁵

The prefatory miniature in *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* reiterates visually St Cuthbert's promise to King Alfred, depicting, as it does, the seventh-century saint from Northumbria standing next to Alfred's grandson, the tenth-century king of Wessex, Æthelstan. St Cuthbert's reputation as a holy man and his miracles drew the attention of kings and nobles who often granted his community lands in exchange for the saint's spiritual support. According to the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, 'the King [Oswin] and all the English magnates gave to St Cuthbert land'.¹⁵⁶ St Cuthbert showed a very active response to the generous royal

¹⁵⁴ During the battle, King Alfred had to retreat to a marshland in Somerset, identified as Glastonbury; there, Saint Cuthbert decided to intervene in King Alfred's favour.

¹⁵⁵ HSC, ch. 14-19a, see Ted Johnson South, *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of St Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony* (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 54-7.

¹⁵⁶ HSC, ch. 3, see T. Johnson South, ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, pp. 43-47.

donations, installing first a congregation of monks and then one of nuns, ordaining an abbess and establishing schools.¹⁵⁷

Various accounts in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* refer to St Cuthbert's miracles, his interaction with kings and his miraculous intervention in battles. For example, when St Cuthbert raised a boy from the dead his miracle was rewarded by 'King Ecgfrith and all the Britons' with more land for the monastic community.¹⁵⁸ In return, St Cuthbert rewarded King Ecgfrith's devotion and generosity with a victory in his battle against the King of the Mercians. Miraculously, King Ecgfrith defeated the Mercian army with only one small boy at his side. The *Historia* tells us that St Wilfrid was next to King Ecgfrith during the battle but the actual victory was granted to the king 'through the prayers of St Cuthbert, who was absent'. Not surprisingly, after the battle, King Ecgfrith offered St Cuthbert more land and 'held him in the highest veneration as long as he lived, himself and all his kindred'.¹⁵⁹

Before King Alfred, another king with close connections with St Cuthbert and his monastic community was King Coelwulf, son of Cuthwining (729-37), who submitted himself to St Cuthbert and joined, 'with great treasure', the monastic community of Lindisfarne. The account in the *Historia* adds that Coelwulf gave up

¹⁵⁷ Soon after the death of Abbot Boisil, St Cuthbert became the abbot of the monastery of Melrose and he started baptising and spreading the word of God. However, the need for an ascetic life led him to the Farne islands where 'saintly Bishop Aidan' had dwelt before him. When he was offered the bishopric of Hexham by Archbishop Theodore of York, during the reign of King Ecgfrith [r. 670-685], St Cuthbert, following the exemplar modesty of Pope Gregory, initially declined the offer. After persuasion he was ordained by Archbishop Theodore, bishop of Lindisfarne, in the church of St Peter in York, in the presence of a conspicuous assembly of seven bishops and various magnates. The ordination was soon followed by important grants of land by both Archbishop Theodore and King Ecgfrith.

¹⁵⁸ HSC 6, see Johnson South, *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of St Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony* (Woodbridge, 2002).

¹⁵⁹ HSC, ch. 7.

his kingdom and his wife 'for the love of God'.¹⁶⁰ However, when the king 'shaved off his beard' and 'accepted the crown [of the tonsure]' he did not forget to grant St Cuthbert more estates.¹⁶¹ This shows that St Cuthbert's cult had been associated with kings and battles long before the famous episode at the battle of Edington, where the saint presented himself to King Alfred as *Cuthbertus Christi miles*.¹⁶²

In the ninth and tenth century the West Saxon kings presented their military expansion in the north as an attempt at unification essential to the formation of the 'English' identity they promoted. The community of St Cuthbert stood as an ideal background in the furtherance of this aim, since it embodied a rich Romano-British and Irish Christian heritage still pulsating with the ascetic spirituality of St Cuthbert.

For this reason the Wessex kings, Alfred, Æthelstan and Edmund were eager to form partnerships with the community of St Cuthbert and to support it with precious gifts and generous donations of land. The royal patronage to St Cuthbert secured the West-Saxon king's control in Northumbria and facilitated

¹⁶⁰ HSC ch. 8.

¹⁶¹ HSC ch. 8; The extensive lands (land holdings) and territory that were given to the monastic community of St Cuthbert by King Æthelstan and others came to be known as the Patrimony of St Cuthbert.

¹⁶² HSC ch.16, 'Dear Alfred, be glad: I am the one to whom today you charitably gave food, and I am called Cuthbert, soldier of Christ. Be strong, and attend diligently and with a glad spirit to what I shall say to you. For henceforth I will be your shield and your friend and the defender of your sons, and now I will tell you what is to be done hereafter. Arise at dawn, sound [your] horn loudly three times so that your enemies may hear and be terrified, and by the ninth hour you will have five hundred armed men; by this sign believe that after seven days you will have, by God's 'ift and with my aid, the whole army of this land prepared to aid you at the hill of Assandune. And so you shall fight against your enemies, and without doubt you will overcome them. Afterwards be joyful and strong without fear, since God has delivered your enemies into your hands, and likewise all this land, and [established] hereditary rule for you and your sons of your sons. Be faithful to me and my people, for all Albion has been given to you and your sons. Be just, for you are chosen King of all Britain. May God be merciful to you, and I shall be your friend so that no adversary may prevail against you', See Ted Johnson South, ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*.

alliances with the Scots.¹⁶³ Accordingly, these partnerships flourished as they were fashioned on a steady pattern of visions, miracles and divine reward or punishment granted by St Cuthbert to his allies in exchange for land grants and privileges for his community.

St Cuthbert's diplomatic efficacy really took off when Abbot Eadred in the name of the saint engineered the election of the new Viking leader, favouring the choice of Guthred, so that he would have the new Viking leader well-disposed to St Cuthbert's community and to the Wessex kings.¹⁶⁴ Indeed, Guthred granted an old Roman fort to the community in 883 and land between Tyne and Wear with rights of sanctuary.¹⁶⁵

Karen Jolly stresses that Northumbria's distinctive identity was closely related to the strong Christian legacy carried by St Cuthbert and his community founded at Lindisfarne.¹⁶⁶ The barren landscape of the Holy Island nurtured strong ascetic ideals while the proximity to the royal site of Bamburgh trained St Cuthbert's community for its future active diplomatic role in the area.

This precious heritage with its old Irish origins gave to Northumbria a key position in the politics of the period, dominated by the Viking threat and the rise

¹⁶³ See Michelle P. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, pp. 84-98; Karen L. Jolly, *The Community of St Cuthbert in the Late Tenth Century*, pp. 1-24.

¹⁶⁴ *HSC*, ch. 13: The *Historia* tells how Abbot Eadred released a young Dane named Guthred from captivity and introduced him to the Vikings as their new leader, after Halfdane's death. See Michelle P. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe* (London, 2003), p. 87 and Karen L. Jolly, *The Community of St Cuthbert in the Late Tenth Century: The Chester-le-Street Additions to Durham Cathedral Library A.IV.19* (Ohio, 2012), pp. 19-20. The *HSC* compares Cuthbert and Alfred to the Old Testament story of Samuel and King David. See *HSC*, ch. 17.

¹⁶⁵ *HSC*, ch. 13; Jolly mentions that the alliance between St Cuthbert community and the Vikings instigated the ritual of swearing oaths on the body of St Cuthbert. See Karen L. Jolly, *The Community of St Cuthbert in the Late Tenth Century*, p. 20.

¹⁶⁶ Karen Jolly, 'History: The Temporal and Geographic Landscape in Northumbria' in *The Community of St Cuthbert in the Late Tenth Century*, pp. 4-24.

of Wessex. And as Michelle Brown stresses, 'In some sense the community of St Cuthbert was a contributory architect of the Danelaw and may have formed a strategic ecclesiastical buffer-zone within in, helping to contain the Danelaw within a pincer movement of southern and northern territories still in English hands'.¹⁶⁷

1.2.2 King Æthelstan and St Cuthbert

The *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* tells us that, when King Æthelstan was leading his army to Scotland, he 'made a diversion to the Church of St Cuthbert and gave royal gifts to him, and then composed the signed testament and placed it at St Cuthbert's head.'¹⁶⁸ The document with the gift-list closes with a warning tone, already found in King Æthelstan's laws, quoting the last words from the Bible:

¹⁶⁷ See Michelle P. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe*, p. 89.

¹⁶⁸ HSC, ch. 26, 'In the name of Lord Jesus Christ I, King Æthelstan, give to St Cuthbert this gospel book' (probably the gospel book in BL, Cotton Otho B.ix) 'two chasubles, and one alb, and one stole with maniple, and one belt, and three altar-coverings, and one silver chalice, and two patens, one finished with gold, the other of Greek workmanship, and one silver thurible, and one cross skilfully finished with gold and ivory, and one royal headdress woven with gold, and two tablets crafted of silver and gold, and two silver candelabra finished with gold, and one missal, and two gospel-books ornamented with gold and silver, and one life of St Cuthbert written in verse and in prose, and seven palls, and three curtains, and three tapestries, and two silver cups with covers, and four large bells, and three horns crafted of gold and silver, and two banners, and one lance, and two golden armlets, and my beloved vill of Bishop Wearmouth with its dependencies, namely Westun, Offerton, Silksworth, the two Ryhopes, Burdon, Seaham, Seaton, Dalton-le-Dale, Dawdon, Cold Hesledon. All these I give under witness of God and St Cuthbert, so that if anyone steals anything there, let him be damned on the Day of Judgement with the traitor Judas and be thrust "into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels"' See Ted Johnson South, ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of St Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony*.

All these I give under witness of God and St Cuthbert, so that if anyone steals anything there, let him be damned on the Day of Judgement with the traitor Judas and be thrust "into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels".¹⁶⁹

According to the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, King Æthelstan also filled two silver cups 'with the best coin, and at his order his whole army offered St Cuthbert twelve hundred [shillings?] and more.'¹⁷⁰ King Æthelstan's precious gifts to the shrine of St Cuthbert, at Chester-le-Street, probably suggest his political aspiration to impose the rule of the West Saxons in the north of England. The *Historia Regum* twice mentions King Æthelstan's visit to St Cuthbert's shrine adding that he gave lands and other royal gifts and consigned any potential thieves to eternal flames.¹⁷¹ The *Libellus de exordio* mentions that the gifts were recorded in a cartulary and included twelve vills.¹⁷² According to the *Cronica monasterii Dunelmensis*, King Æthelstan gave 'regal gifts in gold and silver, palls and curtains and great bells and many other precious ornaments'.¹⁷³ His visit to the monastic foundation ended with the king giving 'two armlets which he bore on his arms' and saying:

¹⁶⁹ HSC, ch. 26; Matt. xxv, 41.

¹⁷⁰ As Ted Johnson South notes, it was Melchisedek who offered bread and wine to Abraham. See HSC, ch. 27 in Ted Johnson South, ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of St Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony* (Woodbridge, 2002); Gen. xiv. 18-19.

¹⁷¹ HRii83 and HRiii 107: It dates King Æthelstan's visit to 934 see Simeon of Durham, *Historia regum* (*Symeonis monachi opera omnia*), ed., Arnold Thomas, RS, 2 vols, no. 75 (London, 1882-85; reprint, 1965).

¹⁷² LDE II. 18. It dates King Æthelstan's visit to 934. See David Rollason, ed. and trans., Simeon of Durham, *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu istius, hoc est Dunhelmensis Ecclesie* (*The Little Book on the Origins and Progress of this Church, that is of Durham*) (Oxford, 2000).

¹⁷³ CMD: 88-90. It dates the visit to 935. See *Chronica Monasterii Dunelmensis*, in H. H. H. Craster, 'The Red Book of Durham', *EHR* xl (1925).

I intend that these be a sign for all who shall come after me that I have established, with most devout heart and under threat of anathema, firm laws and perpetual liberty for the church of my dearest patron, the holy confessor Cuthbert, and of most holy Mary mother of God, as did my predecessors.¹⁷⁴

Once again, King Æthelstan's address to St Cuthbert as his 'dearest patron' echoes the iconography of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, where the depiction of the king and the saint standing next to one another suggests their close relationship. Faithful to St Cuthbert as their grandfather, King Alfred, Æthelstan and his half-brother Edmund enjoyed the great victory in the Battle of Brunaburgh in 937. Moreover, Æthelstan's veneration of St Cuthbert was in accordance with his father's wish, who, when he handed him the kingdom, advised Æthelstan to revere St Cuthbert above all saints.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ CMD, lines 94-8. See *Chronica Monasterii Dunelmensis*, in H. H. H. Craster, 'The Red Book of Durham', *EHR*, xl (1925); The *HSC*, ch. 28, tells us that ten years after King Æthelstan's visit and gifts to the shrine of St Cuthbert, King Edmund also visited Chester-Le-Street, ten years after 'he placed with his own hand two golden armlets and two Greek palls upon the holy body, and granted peace and law, better than any it had ever had, to the whole territory of St Cuthbert.' The *CDM*, lines 104-9, is the second source that mentions King Edmund's visit to Chester-le-Street, in his way to fight the Scots, and his precious gifts to the church 'humbly knelt before the saint's tomb, removing two armlets from his own arm and, and confirmed [the saint's privileges] before the shrine with full indome and wreck and writ, utter and inner, and sake and soke (as it is said in the common tongue), that is full law and peace, inflicting a terrible malediction on all those who might presume in any way to violate the privileges conferred on this church by himself or his predecessors'. See *Chronica Monasterii Dunelmensis*, in H. H. H. Craster, 'The Red Book of Durham', *EHR*, xl (1925); King Edmund's visit to St Cuthbert's shrine is also briefly mentioned in *LDE* II. 18; King Edmund's expedition to the North is described in the *ASC* 944 and 945, where his visit to St Cuthbert's shrine is also described. See Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu istius, hoc est Dunhelmensis Ecclesie* (*The Little Book on the Origins and Progress of this Church, that is of Durham*) (Oxford, 2000).

¹⁷⁵ *HSC*, ch. 25, 'At that time King Edward, full of days and worn down by ripe old age, summoned his son Æthelstan, handed his kingdom over to him, and diligently instructed [him] to love St

In the *Historia*, the account of King Edmund's visit to Chester-le-Street, in 945, echoes that of King Æthelstan. Like his half-brother, King Edmund during his campaign to Scotland 'made a diversion' to the church of St Cuthbert, where the young king: ...

... knelt before his tomb, poured out prayers, and commended himself and his [men] to the holy confessor; the army offered sixty pounds, while he himself with his own hand placed two golden armlets and two Greek palls upon the holy body, granted peace and law better than any it ever had to the whole territory of St Cuthbert, confirmed the grant, and became like another Abraham, who as he hastened toward the enemy offered to Melchisedek bread and wine. When he finished [his] prayer, having commended himself and his whole army many times to the holy confessor, he departed.¹⁷⁶

Compared to Abraham who gives offerings to a high priest in the Old Testament, King Edmund is presented as a generous benefactor serving St Cuthbert and his monastic community as devoutly as his predecessors. A late ninth to tenth century cross shaft in Chester-le-Street commemorates one Eadmund, most likely to be the Anglo-Saxon king Edmund (fig. 70).¹⁷⁷

The *Historia* stresses that King Edmund during his visit at St Cuthbert's shrine 'granted peace and law better than any it ever had to the whole territory of

Cuthbert and honour him above all Saints.' See Ted Johnson South, *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of St Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony*, p. 65.

¹⁷⁶ HSC ch. 28, see Johnson South, *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of St Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony*, p. 67.

¹⁷⁷ Michelle Brown suggests that the sculpture is probably earlier than 945 see Michelle, P. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe* (London, 2003), pp. 86-87.

St Cuthbert'. This apparently suggests formation of alliances between the kings of Wessex and the community of St Cuthbert, which ensured stability in a fragile area, constantly threatened by the Viking presence.¹⁷⁸ As has already been said, the community of St Cuthbert, surrounded by the Viking threat and the Wessex supremacy, tried to maintain its legacy and identity by assuming an instrumental role in northern politics.

Several accounts in the *Historia* tell of land being similarly granted to St Cuthbert's community by Viking and Wessex rulers. In this light the pilgrimages made by Æthelstan and Edmund to Chester-le-Street imply Wessex's attempts at expansion and reintegration, initiated by King Alfred.¹⁷⁹ Likewise, the journey of the Bishop Ælfsige and Aldred together with Kenneth, King of Alba, to Southern England in 970, suggests an attempt from both parts to preserve the stability in the north and to promote the interests of St Cuthbert's community at Chester-le-Street.¹⁸⁰

1.3 The Humble Servant

King Æthelstan's gift-list to Chester-le-Street included books, vestments, church furniture, sacred vessels and a grant of land.¹⁸¹ The gift books may have

¹⁷⁸ See Michelle Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe*, pp. 86-89.

¹⁷⁹ *HSC*, ch 25-8.

¹⁸⁰ See Michelle Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe*, pp. 98-99. Ælfsige was a bishop at Chester-le-Street and Aldred, member of St Cuthbert's Community, became its provost in the mid-tenth century. He added a colophon in the Lindisfarne Gospels see M. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels*, pp. 9, 41 and 90; See also Karen Jolly, *The Community of St Cuthbert in the Late Tenth Century: The Chester-le-Street Additions to Durham Cathedral Library A.IV.19* (Ohio, 2012), pp. 1-4.

¹⁸¹ The grant refers to 'my beloved vill of South Wearmouth [Bishop Wearmouth]' with its dependencies, including Uffertum [Offerton in the parish of Houghton-le-Spring] and the whole of the present parishes of Seaham and Dalton.' The books consisted of 'one missal, two texts of the

included the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* and the lost gospel-book (BL, Cotton MS Otho B.ix) probably written in Brittany in the late ninth or early tenth century.¹⁸² In the tenth century the MS Otto B.ix had a leaf added before the portrait of St Matthew.¹⁸³ The miniature on the added leaf has been associated with King Æthelstan.¹⁸⁴ According to later descriptions, in the miniature King Æthelstan was depicted kneeling before St Cuthbert and offering him a book. An inscription above the figures read:

SCO CVDBERHTO EPIS

EATHELSTAN ANGLO

RVM PIISIMVS REX

HOC EVVANGELIVM OFFERT.¹⁸⁵

The depiction of King Æthelstan holding a book before St Cuthbert, occurring in two manuscripts, not only stresses the close relationship between the

Gospels, ornamented with gold and silver, and a life of St Cuthbert, written in verse and prose.' See HSC, ch. 26. See also Gerald Bonner, 'St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street', in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and Community to AD 1200*. Ed. G. Bonner, D. Rollason, and C. Stancliff, p. 387. The extensive lands and territory that were given to the monastic community of St Cuthbert by King Æthelstan and others came to be known as the *Patrimony of St Cuthbert*; see Dominic Marnier, *St Cuthbert His Life and Cult in Medieval Durham* (Toronto, 2000), p. 19.

¹⁸² Wormald claims that in 937 King Æthelstan visited the shrine of St. Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street and presented the shrine with a copy of Bede's *Vitae Cuthberti* see Francis Wormald 'Continental Influence on English medieval illumination', in *Fourth International Congress of Bibliophiles*, ed. A. R. A. Hobson (London, 1967), p. 163. According to the HSC, in 934 King Æthelstan presented a gospel book to the shrine of St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street among other gifts.

¹⁸³ G. S. B. Hickes and H. Wanley, *Antiqua Literatura Septentrionalis Libri Duo*, II (Oxford, 1705), p. 238; Thomas Smith, *Catalogus Librorum Manuscriptorum Bibliotheca Cottoniana* (Oxford, 1696), p. 70. See also Patrick Wormald, 'Cotton MS Otho B.ix: A Supplementary note', in David Hill and Alexander R. Ruble, *The Defence of Wessex: The Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon fortifications* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 59-64.

¹⁸⁴ The gospel book was written probably in Brittany, in the late ninth or early tenth century.

¹⁸⁵ 'Æthelstan, the pious king of the English, gives this gospel-book to St Cuthbert, the bishop.' See Hickes and H. Wanley vol. II (1705), p. 238.

king and the saint but also suggests the important role of literacy in royal propaganda. The iconography of a king engaged in texts is probably used to imply a bibliophile, competent and wise sovereign.

Simon Keynes suggests that the MS Otho B.ix miniature and the prefatory miniature in the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* are contemporary and closely related, and that the iconography of the former shows influence of late antique tradition, transmitted through Carolingian examples.¹⁸⁶ Still, later descriptions suggest that the lost MS Otho B. ix miniature is quite different from the prefatory miniature in *Vitae Sancto Cuthberti*.¹⁸⁷

The *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* miniature has no inscriptions, King Æthelstan holds an open book in his hands and both figures, the king and the saint, are depicted standing outside a church, on the top of a staircase. By contrast, according to the descriptions, the MS Otho B.ix miniature had an inscription with the names of the king and the saint. Moreover, King Æthelstan was depicted kneeling, before the enthroned St Cuthbert, holding a closed book in one hand and a sceptre in the other.

A miniature in a small-format prayer book belonging to Charles the Bald (Munich, Residenz, Schatzkammer, ff. 38v-39r), produced in the so-called court school of Charles the Bald between 846 and 869, is one of the closest, visually and

¹⁸⁶ Simon Keynes, 'Æthelstan's books', in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 174-80.

¹⁸⁷ Descriptions of the miniature are in the catalogues of Smith and Wanley. See Thomas Smith, *Catalogus Librorum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Cottonianae* (Oxford, 1969): facsimile, ed., C. G. C. Tite, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Cottonian Library* (Cambridge, 1984); Humfrey Wanley, *Librorum veterum septentrionalium, qui in Angliae biblioth. extant, catalogus historico-criticus*, (Oxford, 1705), pp. 141-3.

chronologically, to the MS Otho B.ix miniature (fig. 98).¹⁸⁸ Charles the Bald is shown with a similar three pronged crown, cloak, brooch, leggings and shoes kneeling in proskynesis (fol. 38v) before Christ crucified (fol. 39r).

Robert Deshmann suggests that the inscription over the king 'In cruce qui mundi solvisti crimina Christe / Orando mihimet tu vulnera cuncta resolve' reinforces the sacramental connotations of the iconography.¹⁸⁹ Like Æthelstan, depicted bowing before St Cuthbert in *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, and kneeling before the saint in Cotton MS Otho B.ix, Charles the Bald is portrayed as a humble suppliant, kneeling with outstretched arms towards Christ on the cross, placed on the opposite folio 39r. In effect, the composition is cut in two and framed separately in two opposite folios. This iconographic device not only intensifies the drama in the scene but also creates a diptych which acts like a contemplative icon within the book.¹⁹⁰

By contrast to *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* and MS Otho B.ix, in the prayerbook of Charles the Bald the cross plays the dominant role, not the book. Christ on the

¹⁸⁸ This is the personal prayer book of Charles the Bald (840-877), the grandson of Emperor Charlemagne (747-814). It is the earliest surviving medieval prayer book owned by a European sovereign and contains repentance and canonical prayers, psalms and prayers for different occasions, adapted for use by Charles. The manuscript has 46 parchment pages (13.5 x 11 cm) framed with rich borders and initials and its text is written completely in gold, partly on purple. See Robert Deshman, 'The Exalted Servant: The Ruler Theology of the Prayerbook of Charles the Bald', in *Eye and Mind: Collected Essays in Anglo-Saxon and Early Medieval Art*, ed. Adam S. Cohen (Toronto, 2010), pp. 192-219.

¹⁸⁹ 'O Christ, you who on the cross have absolved the sins of the world, absolve, I pray, all [my] wounds for me'. See Robert Deshman, 'The Exalted Servant', p. 196.

¹⁹⁰ Similar compositions appear occasionally in Carolingian and Ottonian manuscript illumination but not in Anglo-Saxon ones. Examples of this iconographic practice are the following miniatures: *Liuthar presenting his Gospel Book to the Emperor Otto III seated in Majesty*. Aachen Gospels, ff. 15v-16 (c. 996) Aachen, Cathedral Treasury (fig. 107); *Archibishop Egbert of Trier presents his book to St Peter* Egbert Psalter, MS C. xxxvi, ff. 18v-19 (Reichenau, c. 977-93) Cividale del Friuli, Museo Archaeologico (fig. 75); *Ruodprecht presents his book to Archbishop Egbert of Trier* Egbert Psalter, MS Cxxxvi, ff. 16v-17 (Reichenau, c. 977-93) Cividale del Friuli, Museo Archaeologico (fig. 74).

cross channels the prayers of Charles the Bald but it is the book that acts as an agent between King Æthelstan and St Cuthbert in *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* and in Cotton MS Otho B.ix.

However, there is a miniature in the Vivian Bible, produced in Tours, c.846 (Paris, BN, MS lat. 1, fol. 423), which depicts Charles the Bald in his court interacting with a book (fig. 97). Seated on his lofty throne with an arched crown on his head and holding a long spear in his left hand, Charles the Bald stretches his right arm towards the large, golden, closed Vivian Bible.¹⁹¹ The lavish manuscript, carried on a special cloth, is presented to the king by three ecclesiastics, probably involved in the creation of the Bible, who are standing on the left, below his throne.

Giving a glimpse into the lively and sophisticated life of Charles the Bald's court, the iconography stresses the ceremonial aspect of kingship. Here, Charles the Bald is not the humble suppliant kneeling before Christ on the cross, but the omnipotent earthly ruler, blessed and protected by the Hand of God that appears above. Thus, Charles the Bald's majestic presence in his stately court contrasts with the intimate and spiritual atmosphere of the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* prefatory miniature where King Æthelstan humbly holds his open book standing outside St Cuthbert's shrine.

The iconography of Christocentric kingship adopted by Charles the Bald in the Vivian Bible reaches new heights under Emperor Otto III in the Aachen Gospels made in the Abbey of Reichenau c.996 (Aachen, Cathedral Treasury, Clm.

¹⁹¹ The Vivian Bible was presented to Charles the Bald probably by Abbot Vivian during the emperor's stay at Tours between the end of 845 and beginning of 846. Several dignitaries of the abbey of St Martin appear in the scene and the names of three of them -Amandus, Sigualdus, and Aregarius- are mentioned in the dedicatory poem. See Charles R. Dodwell, 'The Carolingian Renaissance' in *The Pictorial Arts of the West, 800-1200*, (Yale University, 1993) pp. 71-74.

4453, ff. 15v-16) (fig. 107).¹⁹² On the dedication page, the gold inscription, 'May God clothe your heart with this book, august Otto, and remember that you received it from Liuthar', is placed above and below the figure of the scribe Liuthar (fol. 15v) who, standing in a quatrefoil, presents a large, golden, book to Otto III depicted on the opposite folio 16.¹⁹³

Holding an *orb cruciger* in his right hand, Otto III, seated in Majesty in a mandorla, surrounded by the symbols of the four evangelists and crowned by the Hand of God, epitomises the 'rex imago-Christ'. As Ernst Kantorowicz notes 'In fact, the unique Reichnau miniature is the most powerful pictorial display of what may be called 'liturgical kingship' -a kingship centred in the God-man rather than in God the Father.' This extremely zealous iconographic Christomimesis transforms Otto's imperial portrait into a sacred icon with a golden background in which the emperor, appearing like Christ, is elevated into heaven.¹⁹⁴

Again, as with Charles the Bald in the Vivian Bible (fig. 97), we see a the sharp contrast between the sublime appearance of Otto III in majesty and the modesty and piety displayed by the bowing figure of King Æthelstan before St Cuthbert in the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti*.¹⁹⁵

The large number of Frankish manuscripts in England by the end of the tenth century suggests a spread of artistic ideas between the Frankish court and

¹⁹² Emperor Otto III (983-1002) had his imperial coronation in 996. See Mayr-Harting, 'Christ-Centred Art', in *Ottonian Book Illumination*, pt. 1, ch. 2 (London, 1991), pp. 57-117, esp. pp. 60-62.

¹⁹³ Mayr-Harting, 'Christ-Centred Art', in *Ottonian Book Illumination*, pt. 1, ch. 2, p. 60.

¹⁹⁴ For a discussion of the miniature, see Ernst Kantorowicz, *The Kings Two Bodies* (1958) pp. 61-88.

¹⁹⁵ As Mayr-Harting notes, '[t]he whole image is like a Maiestas of Christ, and such a glorification of the emperor far surpasses anything customary in eastern or western art', see 'Christ-Centred Art', 1991a, pt. 1, ch. 2, p. 60. For a discussion on 'Christ-centred Kingship' see pp. 60-73.

that of King Æthelstan.¹⁹⁶ Several Anglo-Saxon, Carolingian and Ottonian illuminated manuscripts feature miniatures with monks, scribes, archbishops, saints and kings carrying books.

These scenes typically show the recipient seated and the donor or presenter standing in reverence before him, holding a book. Scribes are depicted presenting their work to the monastic or secular authority who commissioned the manuscript. Archbishops, royal, sacred and divine authorities are portrayed both as donors or recipients of texts.

In Carolingian miniatures Rabanus Maurus is depicted offering his manuscript, *De laudibus Sanctae Crucis*, to Pope Gregory.¹⁹⁷ As a rule, the miniatures show Pope Gregory enthroned in the middle of the composition and Rabanus Maurus standing respectfully before him with a closed book in his hands. The scene, set in a monastic environment, is witnessed by tonsured monks. Here, as in the prefatory miniature of *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, the book is the focal point of the composition and the source of action. In the illustrated manuscript of *De laudibus Sanctae Crucis*, produced in England during the first half of the tenth century (Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.16.3, fol. 1v), the prefatory miniature depicting Rabanus Maurus and Pope Gregory shows influences from Carolingian exemplars.¹⁹⁸

By contrast to the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, in the Vienna miniature (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS 652, fol. 2v; fig.79), the Cambridge, and the

¹⁹⁶ Michelle Wood, 'The Making of King Æthelstan's Empire: An English Charlemagne', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*. Ed. P. Wormald with D. Bullough and R. Collins (Oxford 1983), p. 254.

¹⁹⁷ Rabanus Maurus was Archbishop of Metz (784?-856). He wrote the final edition of his treatise, *De laudibus Sanctae Crucis*, at Fulda in the mid-ninth century.

¹⁹⁸ *Rabanus Maurus presents his work to Pope Gregory IV*. See Robert Deshman, 'Anglo-Saxon Art After Alfred', *The Art Bulletin* 56 (1974), p. 184, fig. 12.

Amiens miniatures (Amiens, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 223, fol. 2v; fig. 80) Pope Gregory and Rabanus Maurus hold the book together. Only in the Vatican miniature (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica MS Reg. Lat. 124, fol. 3v) does Pope Gregory not lay his hand on the book but stretches his arm to reach for it (fig. 78).

The presentation of the manuscript by its author, Rabanus Maurus, to a higher ecclesiastical authority, Pope Gregory, increases its spiritual value and status. Accordingly, the book becomes the medium, and as such, it embodies a strong symbolic message. Its iconic identity moves from a book-cum-relic existence, like St John's gospel in St Cuthbert's coffin (BL, Loan MS 74; fig 28a), to an oath-taking entity and to an intercession medium, often presented as a gift, before sacred or divine authorities.

An Anglo-Saxon miniature of *Aldhelm and Nuns of Barking* from Aldhelm's *De Virginitate*, written in the late tenth century (London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 200, fol. 68v), expresses similar ideas and iconographic traits found in Rabanus Maurus compositions (fig. 35).¹⁹⁹ Standing respectfully before Aldhelm enthroned, the nuns of Barking receive or present the manuscript, *De Virginitate*, to the saint. The saint lays his left hand on the book and raises his right hand in a blessing gesture. This may suggest that the manuscript being touched and blessed by St Aldhelm is elevated to a book-cum-relic status with power of intercession.

¹⁹⁹ Aldhelm (died c.709) was abbot of Malmesbury. In 705 consecrated bishop of Sherborne. He was the most learned teacher of the seventh century Wessex. His Latin treatise on virginity, *De Laude Virginitatis*, is addressed to the nuns of the double monastery at Barking. The preface praises the merits of virginity and the text that follows commemorates several male and female saints.

On Spiritual Hierarchy

It should also be stressed that in a number of scenes, like the one in Aldhelm's *De Virginitate*, it is not quite clear, who is the presenter and who the recipient of the book. However, this may also suggest that the main purpose of the iconography is to highlight the spiritual power of the book as a means of access to a higher authority or as a manifestation of sanction and trust from a higher authority to the elected one.

Similarly, in Ottonian manuscript illumination, several miniatures depict ecclesiastics -monks, scribes and archbishops- carrying or presenting books. In presentation scenes, where the book is handed from one person to another, the social hierarchy is not only conveyed by the vestments of the figures, but also by their size and posture. Typically, the ecclesiastic carrying the book stands bowing before his superior, the recipient of the book, who is depicted enthroned or standing, but in both cases much bigger in size.

Monks and scribes appear holding books before abbots, archbishops and kings. In their turn abbots, archbishops and kings are portrayed holding books before sacred or divine authorities. This further suggests that the iconographical presentation of a book follows a hierarchical structure in which a person of a lower rank values the book as a means of access to a higher authority.

The same hierarchical structure can also move downwards, as in the miniature with God presenting Moses with the tablets containing the Ten Commandments, in the Grandval-Moutier Bible (BL, Add. MS 10546, fol. 25v, fig. 46) produced in Tours, c.840. Similar Anglo-Saxon exemplars show the Almighty giving the Easter Tables to an angel (c.1073) (BL, Cotton MS Caligula A. xv, fol. 123, fig. 32) and another miniature shows the angel giving the Easter Tables to Pachomius (Cotton MS Caligula A. xv, fol. 122v, fig. 31). This reverse hierarchical

movement occurs only when a lower person in hierarchy is chosen by a higher authority—monastic, sacred, or divine—as the elect one, and as such is entrusted with precious texts.

Several miniatures depicting books being presented to archbishops show how the iconography carefully delivers the monastic hierarchy, through the size, posture and placement of the figures in the scene. A miniature from a Pericopes book, written in Reichenau, c.965-70 (Darmstadt, Landesbibliothek, The Gero Codex, MS 1948, fol. 7v), shows Gero Archbishop of Cologne, enthroned and the scribe Anno, much smaller in size, bowing before him with a closed book in his hands (fig. 76).²⁰⁰

Again, in a miniature from a gospel book (c.1000) (Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS C53 Sup., fol. 2v), Archbishop of Cologne, Heribert, is depicted standing and receiving a book from a group of tonsured monks standing before him, significantly smaller in size (fig. 77).²⁰¹ The emphasis on the towering size of the archbishop next to the much smaller monks highlights his higher monastic status and contrasts with the miniature of *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, where King Æthelstan and St Cuthbert standing are the same size, suggesting their equally distinguished status.

A similar iconography appears in the frontispiece of the Codex Egberti, a Pericopes Book made for Archbishop Egbert, in c.977-93 (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 24, fol. 2). Archbishop Egbert of Trier enthroned, with a square golden nimbus, showing that he is a living person, is flanked by two standing Benedictine monks,

²⁰⁰ Gero, archbishop of Cologne from 969 to 976, was the patron of the book. The Cologne Cathedral was dedicated to St Peter. See Henry M. R. E Mayr-Harting, 'The Origins of Ottonian Art' in *Ottonian Book Illumination*, 2 vols (London, 1991), pt 1; p. 25.

²⁰¹ Saint Heribert was archbishop of Cologne and Chancellor to Holy Roman Emperor Otto III. He was canonized by Pope Gregory VII in c.1074.

Keraldus and Heribertus, much smaller in size, who carry closed books. The archbishop holding a crozier in his left hand receives a book by Keraldus (fig. 73).²⁰²

Another example is the Egbert Psalter, written in Reichenau c.977-93 (Cividale del Friuli, Museo Archaeologico, MS Cxxxvi, ff. 16v-17, 18v-19) where two successive miniatures show the hierarchical movement of the book upwards - the book is presented by the scribe to the archbishop and by the archbishop to St Peter- suggesting its key role as a means of access to a higher authority (figs. 74, 75).

The miniature shows Archbishop Egbert (fol. 17) with a square nimbus, seated frontally and hieratically on a cushioned jewelled throne. On the opposite folio 16v, the scribe Ruodprecht, smaller in size, is depicted bowing before the archbishop and holding a closed book (ff. 16v-17; fig. 74).²⁰³ Dressed in mass vestments and pallium, Egbert holds a pastoral staff in his left hand while his right arm is stretched towards Ruodprecht in a gesture of blessing. The contrast between the plain monastic composition and the rich foliage of the frame recalls the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* prefatory miniature.

In the following miniature (ff. 18v-19) Archbishop Egbert, with a square nimbus and holding a book, is depicted bowing (fol.18v) before the enthroned St Peter (fol. 19), the same way as the scribe Ruodprecht bowed before him in the

²⁰² There is no architectural background apart from the inscriptions in golden announcing his name and the names of the other two monks. The plain outer frame changes into an elaborate inner one featuring inhabited foliage. The figures of the monks and the legs of the throne overlap the luxurious inner frame.

²⁰³ Archbishop Egbert of Trier (977-93) was a great patron of manuscript art. His father was Count Dietrich of Holland and his grandfather had founded a monastery at Egmont. See Mayr-Harting, 1991a, 'Codex Egberti', pp. 20-29. Mayr-Harting, 'The Manuscripts of Archbishop Egbert of Trier', in *Ottoman Book Illumination*, pt. 2, pp. 57-69.

previous miniature (fig. 75).²⁰⁴ Another example of higher monastic authority standing before a sacred authority holding a book comes from Hillinus Codex, produced in c.1020 (Cologne, Dombibliothek, Hillinus Codex, MS 12, fol. 16v). Canon Hillinus is depicted standing respectfully and holding a book before St Peter enthroned (fig. 81).²⁰⁵

In the Hidta Codex (Darmstadt, Landesbibliothek, Cod. 1640, fol. 6) produced in Cologne, c.1000-20, Abbess Hidta of Meschede, standing on the left, presents a book to St Walburga, patron of Meschede (fig. 87).²⁰⁶ The representation of the saint standing on a footstool further stresses her towering height next to the abbess, suggesting her higher authority.

The Hidta Codex, like the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, has a list of the other presents that Abbess Hidta offered to St Walburga. Henry Mayr-Harting suggests that the miniature of the abbess and the saint 'represents a form of gift exchange', and adds that 'By giving the book to St Walburga, Hidta shows that she is the authoritative channel of access to the patroness; by receiving the book St Walburga is seen to invest Hidta with the power which a donor has over a recipient.'²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ The background of the miniatures is similar to those depicting Ruodprecht and Archbishop Egbert: rich foliage frame, plain background, with inscription in golden uncials; see Mayr-Harting, 1991a. In another miniature from the Egbert Psalter, Archbishop Egbert, tonsured with a the square nimbus indicating a living person (fol. 18v), stands bowing and holding a closed book with both hands, facing the opposing miniature on the opposite fol. 19 (fig. 74). Tonsured and nimbed, St Peter is seated frontally on an elaborate throne, holding a double crossstaff in his left hand. Unlike St Cuthbert's, St Peter's gesture is not a gesture of blessing or greeting; it rather shows his intention to take the book in his hand.

²⁰⁵ The Codex Hillinus was intended for the altar of St Peter in Cologne cathedral.

²⁰⁶ The codex was made for Abbess Hidta. The architectural background probably represents the nunnery Meschede in Westphalia. See Henry Mayr-Harting, 'Cologne' in *Ottonian Book Illumination*, pt. 2, ch. 3, p. 99-101.

²⁰⁷ See Henry Mayr-Harting, 'Cologne' in *Ottonian Book Illumination*, pt. 2, ch. 3, p. 100-101.

The Hornbach Sacramentary (Solothurn, Zentralbibliothek, Codex U 1, ff. 7v, 8v, 9v, 10v), an Ottonian manuscript produced in Reichenau before 983 for the Benedictine Abbey of Hornbach (Palatinate), presents us with four successive miniatures showing the book steadily moving up the hierarchical ladder (figs. 83-86).²⁰⁸ The book is presented from a lower to a higher monastic authority, then from a higher monastic to a sacred authority, then from a sacred to a divine authority and finally from the divine authority to Christ.²⁰⁹ Thus, in the sacramentary, the miniature on folio 7v shows scribe Eburnant giving the book to Abbot Adalbert (fig. 83), the next miniature (fol. 8v) depicts Abbot Adalbert giving the book to Saint Pirmin (fig. 84), the following miniature portrays Saint Pirmin giving the book to Saint Peter (fol. 9v; fig. 85) and in the last miniature (fol. 10v) Saint Peter gives the book to Christ (fig. 86).²¹⁰

Stressing the hierarchy of the monastic, secular and divine authorities, each miniature follows the same iconographic approach: a plain background divided into three horizontal monochromatic planes with two standing figures in the foreground. This type of background is very similar to the one in the prayer book

²⁰⁸ The manuscript is also called the 'Eburnant Codex' in honour of the scribe who wrote it; Eburnant is depicted giving the manuscript to St Adalbert on folio 7v.

²⁰⁹ See Jonathan Alexander, 'Illuminators at Work: The Early Middle Ages' in *Medieval Illuminators and Their Methods at Work* (1992), pp. 72-95.

²¹⁰ Saint Adalbert was a German monk at the Benedictine Monastery of Saint Maximinus in Trier. He was consecrated bishop in 961 and was sent to Kiev Rus by Emperor Otto the Great. In 968 Adalbert became the first Archbishop of Magdeburgh (died in 981) He was also known as the Apostle of the Slavs because he successful missionary to the Slavic people to the east of Germany, sometimes known as Apostle of the Slavs; Saint Pirmin was born in Spain in 753 and he died in Hornbach Germany. He was a monk, influenced by Celtic Christianity. In 724, he was appointed abbot of Mittelzell Abbey at Reichenau Island, which he had founded. Pirmin's most important book is *Dicta Abbatis Pirminii, de Singulis Libris Canonici Scarapsus* (Concerning the Single Canonical Book Scarapsus).

of Charles the Bald.²¹¹ The hierarchy of the figures is also suggested by the frame. The first two miniatures (ff. 7v, 8v; figs. 83, 84) depicting monastic and sacred authorities have a plain frame, but the next two portraying sacred and divine authorities (ff. 9v, 10v) have a jewelled frame (figs. 85, 86). What is more, in the last miniature (fol. 10v) Christ's jewelled nimbus mirrors the miniature's jewelled frame (fig. 86). The example of the Hornbach miniatures, where the frames appear to match the status of the figures in the scene, suggests that the rich frame of King Æthelstan and St Cuthbert reflects the equally exalted status of the king and the saint.

Even if they do not include royal figures, the Hornbach miniatures are the closest iconographically of the prefatory miniature of *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* in the way they juxtapose two representatives of monastic, sacred or divine domains, who stand one next to the other, without much difference in size, against a plain monastic background. Moreover, in both cases, the figure standing on the left of the scene holds the book and bows before the higher authority on the right, who like St Cuthbert adopts a firm, upright posture.

Descending by pride and Ascending by humility

Notwithstanding the status of the person carrying the book, the iconography consistently presents him as the humble servant of the higher authority next to him. But this, instead of diminishing the status of the supplicant, works to his advantage, because by endorsing himself as a defender of humility he

²¹¹ The background of the miniatures is divided in three monochromatic horizontal planes, which recall the background of the miniature of Charles the Bald kneeling before the Crucified (Munich, Residenz, Schatzkammer, ff. 38v-39r; fig. 98).

exalts himself. The same applies to the iconography of rulers such as Charles the Bald and King Æthelstan, who humble themselves in the presence of the divine. Robert Deshman has stressed the close relationship between humility and exaltation in the iconography of the miniature of Charles the Bald kneeling before Christ Crucified in the Munich Schatzkammer (fig. 78).²¹²

The virtue of humility is a key theme in Christian doctrine, closely related to salvation and opposed to the cardinal vice of pride. In the Old Testament, King David's humility and exaltation is juxtaposed with King Saul's pride and subsequent fall. Several passages in the Bible highlight the crucial role of humility in creating in the supplicant the potential for the closest intimacy with God. In Philippians (2:5-11) Paul stresses the importance of humility in Christian life.²¹³ The same ideas on humility are reiterated in Matthew (23:12) 'Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted', and in James (4:10) 'Humble yourself before the Lord, and He will exalt you'.²¹⁴

Furthermore, St Benedict in his Rule also stresses the important role of humility in the monastic life. In Chapter VII, 'On Humility', St Benedict extols the virtues of humility and obedience which lead to the exaltation of the faithful, and

²¹² Robert Deshman, 'The Exalted Servant: The Ruler Theology of the Prayerbook of Charles the Bald', in *Eye and Mind*, ed. Adam S. Cohen (2010), pp. 192-219.

²¹³ 'For let this mind be in you, which was also in Jesus Christ: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery, to be equal with God: But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man. He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death: even to the death of the cross. For which cause God also hath exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above all names: That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in glory of God the Father' (Phil. 2:5-11).

²¹⁴ 'If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land' [2Chr. 7:14]; 'Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you' (1 Peter 18:12); 'But he gives more grace. Therefore it says "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble"' (James 4:6); 'Before destruction a man's heart is haughty, but humility comes before honour' (Proverbs 18:22).

condemns the vices of pride and disobedience which initiate moral destruction and alienation from God.

Hence, brethren, if we wish to reach the greatest height of humility, and speedily to arrive at that heavenly exaltation to which ascent is made in the present life by humility, then, mounting by our actions, we must erect the ladder which appeared to Jacob in his dream, by means of which angels were shown to him ascending and descending (cf Gen 28:12). Without a doubt, we understand this ascending and descending to be nothing else but that we descend by pride and ascend by humility. The erected ladder, however, is our life in the present world, which, if the heart is humble, is by the Lord lifted up to heaven. For we say that our body and our soul are the two sides of this ladder; and into these sides the divine calling hath inserted various degrees of humility or discipline which we must mount.²¹⁵

Thus the iconography of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* by endorsing the theological ideas of the period and depicting King Æthelstan as a humble servant of St Cuthbert exalts Anglo-Saxon kingship yet further.

1.3.1 The Open Book

In manuscript illuminations both Anglo-Saxon kings, Æthelstan (*Vitae Sancto Cuthberti*, fol. 1v and MS Otho B.ix) and Edgar (New Minster Charter, fol. 2v, fig. 4 and Cotton MS Tiberius A. iii fol. 2v; fig. 37) are shown interacting with texts.

²¹⁵ Timothy Fry, O. S., ed. and trans., 'On Humility', in *The Rule of St Benedict in Latin and English with Notes*, ed. and trans., (Collegeville, 1981), ch. vii.

In the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* the intimate relationship between King Æthelstan and St Cuthbert is expressed by the proximity of the figures, similar size, attentive gestures, responsive postures and the absence of any witness to the scene. In a monastic atmosphere of reverence and contemplation, the close interaction between the king and the saint may also suggest a teacher-pupil relationship. Indeed, King Æthelstan bends diligently over his open book like a studious pupil while St Cuthbert, like a devoted teacher, supervises him attentively and approvingly.

But above all it is the book that, regardless of the different status of the figures, functions as the connecting link between the king and the saint, since both stand holding books. A powerful symbol of Christianity and literacy, the book is closely related to ecclesiastics and wise people. Accordingly, the depiction of an Anglo-Saxon king holding an open book in his hands within reading distance makes him appear in the favourable light of a pious, literate and wise ruler. Furthermore, the king's acquaintance with written texts not only suggests his wisdom and piety but also relates him to all great and wise sovereigns before him.

Æthelstan's prefatory miniature in *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* has been interpreted by Catherine Karkov as having all the standard features of a presentation scene such as a bowing king holding a book before a saint and the saint's open-palmed gesture of acceptance. She points out that Æthelstan is not reading from the book but is offering the book to St Cuthbert, since readers are usually depicted seated and not standing in the manuscripts the period.²¹⁶ As for

²¹⁶ Catherine Karkov argues that King Æthelstan does not read from the open book since almost always readers of the period are portrayed seated and not standing. According to Karkov, the bowing of the king's head and the saint's gesture of acceptance are characteristics of a presentation scene. As for the fact that the book is shown open she argues that this is a standard way of

the depiction of the open book, Catherine Karkov suggests that this is a standard way of displaying a book.

However, the open book in the prefatory miniature is clearly in Æthelstan's pictorial space as it faces him and not the saint. Nothing really suggests a standard presentation scene similar to the ones already discussed above, given that neither does St Cuthbert make any gesture towards the book nor does King Æthelstan offer it. Æthelstan's book, by being open and facing him, suggests that it is being actively used by the king and not just carried as an attribute like St Cuthbert's small closed book. This is further suggested by the reading distance between the king and his book. However, it is also noticeable that Æthelstan's downcast eyes are not entirely focused on the open book as his right eye is strangely looking out of the picture towards the viewer, involving him in this way as a witness to the scene (fig. 2).

This study agrees with the suggestions made by David Rollason and George Henderson that the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* is not a presentation scene, since King Æthelstan is looking at the open book without placing it in the hands of St Cuthbert.²¹⁷ Interpreting the picture as a meditation scene, George Henderson argues that Anglo-Saxon artists often tend to connect texts and pictures, the one precisely mirroring the other. Thus the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* visually reflects the passage in the prologue

displaying a book. See Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 59-60.

²¹⁷ D. Rollason, 'St Cuthbert and Wessex: The Evidence of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 183', in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and His Community to AD 1200*, ed. G. Bonner, D. Rollason, C. Stancliffe (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 413-24; George Henderson, 'The Idiosyncrasy of Late Anglo-Saxon Religious Imagery', in *England in the Eleventh Century*, ed. Carola Hicks (Stamford, 1992), pp. 239-49.

to the Prose Life in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, where Bede commends the book to the reader, saying that it will inspire him 'to a more eager desire for the heavenly kingdom'.²¹⁸

David Rollason suggests that the open book and the downcast eyes of King Æthelstan imply that the king is reading from the book rather than presenting it to St Cuthbert.²¹⁹ This is also suggested by Richard Gameson, who says that the depiction of the king's reading to St Cuthbert highlights both Æthelstan's literacy and his personal devotion to St Cuthbert, since the king is presented actively serving the saint.²²⁰ Richard Gameson also stresses that the act of reading enhances the king's status as an ideal ruler, who respects and carries on his grandfather's belief in learning.²²¹

We know little of King Æthelstan's literary skills.²²² Nevertheless, the depiction of the king with downcast eyes over the open book he holds in his hands definitely suggests a respect and love for books. Since literacy was so limited in the medieval society, even in the ecclesiastical circles, it is understandable that literacy gave a lay person or cleric considerable authority and privilege and unquestionably increased a king's glory in the eyes of his subjects. King Alfred's

²¹⁸ George Henderson, 'The Idiosyncrasy of Late Anglo-Saxon Religious Imagery', in *England in the Eleventh Century*, ed. Carola Hicks (Stamford), p. 240; David Rollason, 'St Cuthbert and Wessex: The Evidence of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 183', in *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to AD 1200*, ed. G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 421-3.

²¹⁹ David Rollason, 'St Cuthbert and Wessex: The Evidence of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 183', in G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe, eds, *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to AD 1200* (Woodbridge, 1989), p. 421; David Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1989), p. 150.

²²⁰ Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church* (Oxford, 1995), p. 256.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59, no. 236, p. 256.

²²² For a discussion of literacy, see Rosamond McKitterick, 'Correctio, knowledge and power', in *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 292-372.

contempt for his illiterate earls, for instance, shows how highly he regarded literacy and how conscious he was of its power.

A number of late Anglo-Saxon miniatures portray secular, ecclesiastical, sacred and divine personages engaged in presentation scenes, where the books are depicted open. In Carolingian, Anglo-Saxon and Ottonian miniatures, the presence of open books in the hands of secular, ecclesiastical or divine personages suggests that books are being used by them for various reasons such as instruction, presentation, reading, writing and intercession. Unsurprisingly, the beholder would assume the depicted figure holding an open book to be familiar with it and able to use it, that is to say, to be a literate person.

Intercession

In a number of intercession scenes, especially the ones related with Crucifixion and the Last Judgement, feature open books usually carried by a sacred or divine authority depicted standing before a kneeling suppliant. In some Crucifixion scenes, St John also appears standing with an open book in his hand. In the Crucifixion outline drawing of an Anglo-Saxon psalter from the second quarter of the eleventh century (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff. I. 23, fol. 88v), St John stands opposite the Virgin Mary, holding an open book and pointing at the text with his fingers (fig. 126).

The frontispiece in one of the gospel-books, written probably in England c.1050-1065 (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 709, fol. 1v), which Judith, countess of Flanders (1032-94), gave to Weingarten Abbey, shows a Crucifixion scene with St John and the Virgin Mary (fig. 128). St John stands on the right side of the rough-hewn cross holding an open book in his left hand and this time he holds a stylus in his right hand to write with it on the book. Similar to the Cambridge Psalter discussed above, here, the open book and the stylus imply St

John's reading and writing skills but in this case they probably also refer to his presence at the event as an eye-witness.²²³

In the frontispiece, Judith of Flanders is depicted veiled, in a long-sleeved gown at the foot of the cross, like the penitent Mary Magdalene.²²⁴ This is a 'donor portrait' of a secular patroness and Judith's piety and humility are expressed by her small size and humble kneeling pose. Moreover, Judith's devout figure turning to St John suggests a pressing appeal for his intercession for her with Christ.

An episode of intercession occurs also in the middle register of the Last Judgement miniature in the New Minster *Liber Vitae* (fol. 7), where St Peter fights a demon trying to save a human soul from hell (figs. 14, 16). Here, both the angel standing by St Peter and the demon hold open books, implying that they are literate. Once again, the depiction of open books suggests their crucial role in scenes of salvation and intercession.

An outline drawing in St. Gregory's Commentary on Ezekiel, produced in Fleury in the late tenth century (Orléans, Bibliothèque Municipale. MS. 175, fol. 149), shows an intercession scene with similarities to the prefatory miniature of *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* (fig. 41). In the scene St Gregory and St Benedict stand on

²²³ The three gospel books, known as Weingarten gospels, were commissioned by Judith during her marriage to Tostig Godwinson, earl of Northumbria (1051-64) or after his death. Judith, Countess of Flanders and wife of Tostig, Earl of Northumbria, gave two manuscripts to the abbey of Weingarden; See George Zarnecki, 'Ottonian Art', in *Art of the Medieval World* (New York, 1975), pp. 165-73. See George Zarnecki, 'Ottonian Art', in *Art of the Medieval World* (New York, 1975), pp. 165-73; Barbara C. Raw, 'Pictures: The Books of the Unlearned', in *The Christian Tradition in Anglo-Saxon England: Approaches to Current Scholarship and Teaching*, ed. Paul Cavit (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 103-120, esp., pp. 107-108.

²²⁴ See Caviness H. Madeleine, 'Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons or Intercessors and Matrons?' in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash (Georgia, 1996), pp. 124-125, and also Barbara C. Raw, 'Pictures: The Books of the Unlearned', pp. 107-108.

each side of Christ in Majesty with an open book. Holding an open book in his left hand, St Benedict points to the monk kneeling at his feet and, looking upwards to Christ, like St Cuthbert, intercedes for him. The standing figures of the saints, the open books of Christ and St Benedict, and the scroll of St Gregory seem to facilitate the intercession for the monk with God and suggest their close relationship to salvation.

An outline drawing in a prayer book of 1023-1035, written in Latin and Anglo-Saxon (BL, Cotton MS Titus D. xxvi, fol. 19v), shows St Peter with the monk Ælfwine. The enthroned saint holds his key in the right hand and an open book in his left, whereas the small figure of the monk, holding a closed book in *orans* stance, is looking towards the saint (fig. 42). Taking into account the significant difference in size between the saint and the suppliant monk, St Peter's key and open book this scene probably suggests the monk's plea for the saint's intercession with God.

Divine Texts

A number of miniatures also depict scenes with divine texts in form of scrolls or tablets delivered to biblical leaders or various monastic authorities. In the Moutier-Grandval Bible, made in Tours, c.840, in the page illustrating *Exodus* (BL, Add. MS 10546, fol. 24v), Moses, standing in the upper register, receives the tablets from the Hand of God. In the lower register, the figure of Moses standing with the tablets in his hands before the Israelites (fig. 46), is similar to that of the bishop in the Benedictional of Æthelwold, written in Winchester (BL, Additional MS 49598, fol. 118v), who stands holding an open book in front of the congregation (fig. 61).

Miniatures with ecclesiastical, sacred or divine authorities receiving or delivering texts appear also in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. A drawing in a psalter,

c. 1012-23 (London, British Library, Arundel MS 155, fol. 9v), shows St Pachomius receiving the Easter Tables written on a scroll from an angel (fig. 30).

A similar drawing in the Paschal Tables, written at Christ Church, Canterbury, c.1073 (BL, Cotton MS Caligula A. xv, fol. 122v) represents St Pachomius receiving from an angel a scroll with the Paschal Tables written on it (fig. 31). Another outline drawing of the same manuscript, on fol. 123, depicts the Almighty in a mandorla, between two seraphs, holding an open book in the left hand and giving, with his right hand, a scroll with the Paschal Tables to an angel to deliver to St Pachomius (fig. 32).

Once again, the depiction of St Pachomius receiving the scroll with the Paschal Tablets from the angel, who becomes in effect the messenger between God and the saint, shows that the saint is capable of reading and readily transmitting the content of the Paschal Tables to the other monks. In a similar manner, the depiction of Moses standing with the tablets in front of the Israelites shows that the patriarch can read and deliver to his people the content of the tablets.

Consulting, Displaying, and Presenting Open Books

In other miniatures the presence of open books suggests that they are being used or will be used by a learned authority for instruction purposes or liturgical practices.²²⁵ In the prefatory miniature of the New Minster *Liber Vitae* (fol. 6) the

²²⁵ The same can be suggested in the illustrations depicting King David playing his harp among his scribes and musicians in the Vespasian Psalter, written in Canterbury c.750, (London, British Library, Cotton MS Vespasian A. i, fol. 30v) (fig. 70) and again seated playing his harp surrounded by his musicians in a psalter from the second quarter of the eleventh century (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff. I. 23, fol. 4v) then dancing holding his lyre in the Vivian Bible, made in Tours c.846 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 1, fol. 215v; fig. 48) and playing his lyre in the Portiforium Sancti Wulfstani c.1064-1039 (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 391, fol 24v; fig. 50) or when the king is depicted holding the sling and the sword against Goliath in the illustration

depiction of Christ in Majesty in the upper register and the monk, in the centre of the lower register, both with open books in their hands, suggests that the books are being used by Christ and the monk; nobody would question the level of their literacy (figs. 7, 9). And again, as we have seen in the Last Judgement miniature (fol. 7r), in the middle register, both the angel and the demon hold open books, thus implying that they can read the texts (figs. 14, 16).

In the illustration preceding the blessing for the dedication of a church in the Benedictional of St Æthelwold, produced in Winchester c.971-984 (BL, Additional MS 49598, f. 118v), a bishop, standing before the congregation, holds an open book in his left hand and raises his right hand in a gesture of blessing (fig. 61). In the above examples, Christ in Majesty, the monk, the angel, the demon and the bishop, in holding the open books towards them, suggest their competence with written texts and accordingly with books thus establishing themselves as literate personages. Moreover, it suggests the importance of books at the Last Judgement. It should also be noted that, like King Æthelstan, all these figures, apart from the Christ in Majesty in *Liber Vitae*, are depicted standing and holding an open book.

Similar compositions depicting standing figures with open books in their hands appear in Ottonian miniatures. In some scenes the book seems to be used merely for display since it is not facing the figure that holds it. In the frontispiece of the Sacramentary of Bishop Warmund, produced in Ivrea c.1000, (Biblioteca Capitolare, Cod. Lxxxvi, fol. 11v), Bishop Warmund stands before the altar

to Psalm 143 in the Stuggart Psalter, c. 830 (Stuggart, Wurttembergische Landesbibl., MS Bibl. Fol. 23, fol. 158v; fig. 51). In these miniatures, nobody could question the king's ability to play the lyre or to use the sling and the sword. Accordingly, the depiction of King Cnut with a sword in the prefatory miniature of *Liber Vitae* implies that the king can use it (fig. 7).

holding an open book.²²⁶ Here, in contrast to the *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* prefatory miniature, it is obvious that the bishop does not read from the book since the open book faces the tonsured deacon standing on the other side of the altar rather than the bishop himself.

The frontispiece to the Bible of Bishop Bernward of Hildesheim, c.1015 (Hildesheim, Cathedral Treasury, MS 61, fol. 1) depicts a large golden cross in a church. Beneath, on the left of the cross stands a young, haloed man in priestly garb, holding a book, and on the right a veiled haloed, woman (fig. 88).²²⁷ Again, here, the young man turns the open book towards the female figure, pointing with his right hand at the written text. In these two Ottonian miniatures it is noticeable that the ecclesiastics do not read from the open books but display their sacred texts to the bystander probably during some religious practice in the church, which requires them to be standing.

However, it should be also noted that in some Anglo-Saxon miniatures enthroned ecclesiastical, divine or secular authorities hold open books which are facing the beholder. In such cases it is most likely that the content of the book is displayed for scholastic or edifying purposes. An outline drawing in the Arundel Psalter (BL, The Arundel Psalter, MS 155, fol. 10) shows St Benedict enthroned holding an open book. The saint is blessing with his right hand and pointing at the text of his open book with his left hand. Seated on each side of St Benedict, both

²²⁶ Bishop Warmund of Ivrea (969-1011); The bishopric of Ivrea had a key position for the Ottonians since it enabled the control of the routes from Burgundy to Italy. See Mayr-Harting, 1991a, Part II, ch. 2(b) pp. 87-90, ill. 55.

²²⁷ For the discussion of the frontispiece, see Henry Mayr-Harting, 'Some Eleventh-Century Trends, in *Ottonian Book Illumination*, (London, 1991a), pt. 2, ch. 6, pp. 183-6. The figure of the young man has been interpreted as Moses, St Jerome and John the Evangelist and the woman as Ecclesia. I would agree with Harting that the figures have 'an unmistakable analogy to Mary and John the Evangelist', at p. 185.

monks, the one holding an open book, and the other a closed one, are looking at the saint (fig. 39).

The miniature in the Arundel Psalter reminds us of the outline drawing of the 'Qiuinity', the Trinity with the Virgin and Child, in Ælfwine's prayerbook, made at New Minster, Winchester, c.1023-1035 (BL, Cotton MS. Titus D. xxvii, fol. 75; fig. 40). In the 'Quintiny', all the divine figures apart from the Virgin Mary are holding books. What is more, the books held by Jesus, seated on his mother's lap, and by God the Son are open and Jesus points to the text in his open book. Here, as in the miniature of St Benedict and the two ecclesiastics in the Arundel Psalter (fig. 39) the books seem to be used by the seated figures for display.

A similar outline drawing features in the prefatory miniature of the *Regularis Concordia* produced at Christ Church Canterbury around the middle of the eleventh century (BL, MS Cotton Tiberius A.iii, fol. 2v) (fig. 37). King Edgar is seated between St Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester, and St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, who turn their heads to look at him. The king and his ecclesiastics hold and display together a scroll, which may be the *Regularis Concordia*, whereas in the lower register, a kneeling monk, girdled with the scroll, is looking towards them.

A very similar composition, but without any royal presence is depicted in the outline drawing in the Hymnal and Ælfric's Grammar bound together in the mid-eleventh century (Durham, Cathedral Library, MS B. iii.32, fol. 56v) (fig. 38). It shows two seated ecclesiastics holding a scroll and turning to one another. In all these miniatures the seated figures holding open books or scrolls turn to one another probably suggesting the practice of regular discussions and meetings between ecclesiastics.

However, open books are also related to presentation scenes where books are handed open by the author, scribe or a group of monks to a higher ecclesiastical, sacred or divine authority, usually depicted enthroned. An outline drawing in the Arundel Psalter, written in Canterbury c.1012-23 (BL, Arundel MS 155, fol. 133) shows St Benedict enthroned—similarly to St Peter enthroned *with the monk Ælfwine standing humbly before him in an Anglo-Saxon prayer book, c.1023-35* (BL, Cotton MS Titus D. xxvi fol. 19v; fig. 42)—with the monks of Canterbury standing on his left holding the Rule open with the text facing the saint (fig. 33). As for the copy of the *Regularis Concordia*, produced in Canterbury c. 1050 (British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius A.iii, fol. 117v), it depicts St Benedict enthroned with his left hand on an open copy of his *Rule* presented with the text facing him, whereas three monks standing on the right hold another two open copies showing written texts (fig. 34). In the lower register two monks are depicted kneeling; one is holding St Benedict's footstool and the other is girdled with a scroll probably the Rule.

Like St Benedict in the Arundel Psalter (fig. 33) and in the *Regularis Concordia*, Tiberius A.iii, (fig. 36) Queen Emma/Ælfgifu is depicted enthroned in the prefatory miniature of the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* c.1041-2 (BL, MS Additional 33241, fol. 1v) receiving the open manuscript from its author with two royal onlookers, probably her sons Edward the Confessor and Alfred, standing behind him (fig. 36).

Typically, in these presentation scenes, the secular or sacred authorities are depicted enthroned while a figure of lower status, standing or kneeling in reverence before them, offers the open book. Descriptions of the lost Otho B. ix miniature with King Æthelstan kneeling before St Cuthbert suggest similarities with the iconography of the above presentation scenes, even if King Æthelstan is

described as holding a closed book. By contrast, in the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* King Æthelstan is not offering the open book and St Cuthbert's open hand gesture pointing to the king, combined with his eyes turning upwards suggests an intercession scene.

1.3.2 The Raised Hand

King Æthelstan's open book and St Cuthbert's raised hand are the focus of the composition in the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*. In his grants, King Æthelstan presents himself as the supreme ruler of all Britain enjoying a special relationship to the Divine King.²²⁸ Here, however, the king humbly bows to St Cuthbert, keeping his eyes cast down onto the open book, whereas the saint, austere and upright, pointing with his right hand to the king's crown, turns his glance upward as if interceding for the king with God. In view of that, St Cuthbert's right hand gesture is not only a gesture of blessing or greeting as has often been interpreted, but also suggests a gesture of intercession.²²⁹

From an early period, the monastic community expressed an interest in gestures because the human body played a crucial role in the Christian doctrine

²²⁸ 'I, Æthelstan, King of England by the grace of God, and ruler of this island by the favour of God and of all his saints, grant these estates' and, further on, 'In the name of God, I, Æthelstan, by the grace of God, the king ruling the whole of Britain, along with all my councillors and all the bishops of the kingdom of England'; see Agnes, J. Robertson, ed. 1939 (2nd ed. 1956). *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (Cambridge, 1939), pp. 45, 49.

²²⁹ In *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* Saint Cuthbert has his right hand raised in a gesture of greeting rather than blessing, as Michael Keynes suggests. See Simon Keynes, 'Æthelstan's books', p. 180; According to Catherine Karkov, Keynes mistakenly interpreted the gesture of St Cuthbert in *Corpus Vitae Cuthberti* as one of blessing, possibly influenced by the description of the Cotton Otho B.ix lost miniature. See Catherine Karkov 2004, p. 56, n. 13.

for the salvation of the soul as it carried the potential for Fall or Redemption.²³⁰ Christianity, promulgating notions of sin and shame, condemned the human body and considered certain gestures as an expression of vice and an obstacle to salvation. On the other hand, the human body and ritualistic gestures of charity, penance and piety were regarded as a channel for the redemption of mankind. According to St Augustine, gestures were conventional signs making communication possible between all beings, human and supernatural, between man and God, the angels and the devil. Augustine distinguished between superstitious gestures and sacramental gestures.²³¹

Similarly, in his *Rule*, St Benedictine discusses gestures. Silence was particularly important during meals, as the monks should listen carefully to the holy readings. Thus, a sign language was essential for the observance of the 'Summum fiat silentium'.²³² The use of sign language in monasteries helped the monks to cope with the daily practicalities of the community and to observe

²³⁰ During the Carolingian Renaissance, Remigius of Auxerre (c. 841-908), a Benedictine monk, teacher of Latin grammar and author, gave a definition of gestures using the word *gestus*. He opposed the *gestus* of a single limb to the movement *motus* of the whole body. *Gestus* was opposed to *gesticulatio* which had a demonic connotation; At the same time, the term 'holy gesticulation' implied a divine origin. Schmitt gives as an example of 'holy gesticulation' the sacred dance of David, who in the Old Testament, jumped naked before the ark. In the church itself 'holy gesticulation' was expressed through liturgical procession, psalmody or even dancing. According to Schmitt, such behaviour, which we witness in the iconography of the Psalmist and Evangelists, encapsulated the concept widely held at the time that supernatural forces controlled human bodies and dictated part of their movements and gestures. See Jean-Claude Schmitt, 'The Rationale of Gestures in the West: Third to Thirteenth Centuries', in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, eds., Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg (Ithaca, 1992), pp. 59-70.

²³¹ Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford, 1972), p. 56-70; Ernst H. Gombrich, 'Ritualised Gesture and Expression in Art', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, ser. B, vol. 251, issue 772 (1966), pp. 393-401; Cornelius O' Boyle, 'Gesturing in the Early Universities', *DYNAMIS* 20 (*Acta Hispanica ad Medicinae Scientiarumque Historiam Illustradam*) (Granada, 2000), pp. 249-281, esp. p. 260.

²³² J. McCann, trans., *The Rule of St Benedict* (London, 1976), chapt. 38, p. 45; Indicia Monasterialia was an Old English sign Language, see N. Barley, 'Two Anglo-Saxon sign systems compared' in J. Umiker-Sebeok and T. A. Sebeok, eds, *Monastic Sign Language* (Berlin, 1987), p. 27.

silence at the same time. Bede, for example, designed a system of gestures to indicate numbers.²³³

Rudolf Wittkower stresses the predominance of symbolic gestures in medieval art, and argues that a symbolic gesture in contrast to the rhetorical ones has a code 'which must be known in order to be understood.'²³⁴ C. R. Dodwell has suggested that there are strong similarities, in form and meaning, between gestures in late Anglo-Saxon illuminated manuscripts and those depicted in the illustrated manuscripts of the plays of the second Roman century B.C. playwright, Terence.²³⁵ There is, however, no firm historical evidence in support of his argument.

In Christian art, the symbolic gesture of blessing is performed with the right hand. Typically in this gesture three of the fingers are separated from the other two. However, there is no strict formula concerning the grouping of the fingers and occasionally the raised right hand with all fingers upright and the hand

²³³ Faith Wallis, ed. and trans., Bede, *The Reckoning of Time* (De Temporum Ratione) (Liverpool, 1999), pp. 9-13.

²³⁴ Rudolf Wittkower, 'El Greco's Language of Gesture', in *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols* (London, 1987), p. 149; Garnier examines the nature and properties of the medieval image, focusing on the significance, the symbolism and the grammar of its iconographic language, see François Garnier, *Le Langage de l'Image Au Moyen Age: Signification et Symbolique* (Paris, 1989); Schmitt classifies medieval gestures according to the following notions: expressivity, non-verbal-communication, efficacy. He calls the abstract aspect of a gesture, the aspect that cannot be identified with something material, a *symbolic act*. This *symbolic act*, which is invoked in rituals and ceremonies, has symbolic not technical efficacy. The notion of 'efficacy' has a double meaning: the practical efficacy of technical gestures (sawing, writing, etc.) and the symbolic efficacy of political or sacramental rituals. See Jean-Claude Schmitt, 'The Rationale of Gestures in the West: Third to Thirteenth Centuries', in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, eds., Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg (Ithaca, 1992), pp. 59-70.

²³⁵ Dodwell examining the Carolingian copy of Terence in the Vatican Library (Vat.lat.3868) claims that in late Anglo-Saxon England there was an illustrated copy of the plays of Terence available and that its illustrations were studied with great interest, see Charles R. Dodwell, *Anglo-Saxon Gestures and the Roman Stage* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 102-45.

cupped can also suggest a gesture of blessing. Accordingly, there are three dominant variations in the gesture of blessing.

Tessa Morrison defines as gesture eight (G8) the gesture of the blessing hand with the ring and little fingers bent down to the middle of the palm and the rest of the fingers raised with the palm facing outwards.²³⁶ This variation is the same as the one used to represent the number eight, number important in Christian belief since the eighth day, as St Augustine stresses, is regarded blessed:

The first life was not eternal for the sinner, but the last rest is eternal, and for this reason the eighth day will have eternal blessedness, because that rest which is eternal is taken up from the eighth day and it has no setting; otherwise, it would not be restored to immortality.²³⁷

Morrison identifies as gesture one (G1) the blessing gesture with the right hand raised, and the second finger and the thumb forming a circle. In Byzantine art, the most frequently used blessing gesture was similar to G1.²³⁸ The third type

²³⁶ The G8 blessing gesture dominated the continental art but was absent from early insular art. It appears in insular manuscripts in the eighth century, see Tessa Morrison, 'An Examination of the Blessing Hand in Insular Art', in *Making and Meaning in Insular Art*, ed. Rachel Moss (Dublin, 2007), pp. 294-300.

²³⁷ Augustine, *Letters*, trans. W. Parsons, vol. 12 (Washington, 1964), Letter 55, p. 274; The number eight was also associated with baptism. In early Christian architecture, fonts and baptisteries were often octagonal, see Tessa Morrison, 'An Examination of the Blessing Hand in Insular Art', in *Making and Meaning in Insular Art*, ed. Rachel Moss (Dublin, 2007), p. 294.

²³⁸ In early Byzantine art we find both G1 and G8. However the G1 prevails in early Insular, Coptic and Byzantine art, but in icons from the sixth century the blessing gesture is performed with a raised, open, cupped hand. G1 gradually disappears from continental art and its source seems to be from Coptic and Byzantin, see Tessa Morrison, 'An Examination of the Blessing Hand in Insular Art', pp. 288-300; Dodwell dates this gesture to the eleventh century and suggested that it represented approval and acquiescence. See C. R. Dodwell, *Anglo-Saxon Gestures and the Roman Stage* (Cambridge, 2000), pl. xllla.

of hand gesture is the one with the raised right hand with all fingers upright and the hand cupped, much used by Roman emperors.

In early Christian art there are examples with all three gestures co-existing in the same composition. Such an example is the mosaic of the Transfiguration of Christ, in the apse of the church of St Catherine, Mount Sinai (c.550-565), where Jesus, Elijah and Moses are depicted with the two variations of the blessing gesture, G1 and G8, whereas John and Jacob are kneeling with raised, open and cupped hands (fig. 143).

Morrison's third type of hand gesture, with raised right hand, all fingers upright and hand cupped, is closer to the gesture of St Cuthbert in the prefatory miniature. However, there are also significant differences between the two gestures. St Cuthbert's hand is not cupped, the palm faces the viewer and the fingers joined together point to the king, while the thumb points upwards. Accordingly, this is not a gesture of blessing but more a gesture of presenting a person, or interceding for him with a higher authority.

It is the same gesture that St Adalbert adopts when he intercedes with God for Count Dietrich of Holland and his wife Hildegard kneeling before him, in a miniature from a Gospel Book produced in Lotharingia, c.940-70, (The Hague, Royal Library, MS 761/1, fol. 215) (fig. 142b). Moreover St Adalbert, like St Cuthbert, turns his eyes upwards invoking God's blessing.

The gesture of the Virgin Mary in the frontispiece of the Leo Bible c.930-40, the earliest surviving illustrated Byzantine Bible (Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, MS Reg. gr. 2v) reflects the gesture of St Cuthbert and St Adalbert and similarly has strong intercessory overtones (fig. 122). In the miniature Leo patrikios praipositos

sakellarios (grand chamberlain, highest-ranking eunuch, and treasurer) offers his book to the Virgin Mary kneeling before her towering figure.²³⁹ The Virgin Mary looking at the viewer intercedes for the patrician with her Son, pointing to Leo with her right hand and to Christ, appearing above, with her left hand. The Virgin here stands as intercessor for humanity with her Son, suggesting that prayer and meditation, is the path to the divine, her Son, the Saviour.

1.4 'For the Unlearned' ²⁴⁰

The prominent presence of the book in all the three prefatory miniatures, suggests its importance in the Christian faith and the close relationship between literacy and kingship in Anglo-Saxon period.²⁴¹ In the hands of secular, sacred, and divine authorities these books not only assert their iconic status but also suggest their efficacy as intercessors between the secular and the divine world.

The book and the cross became the most prominent symbols of the Christian faith. Christianity revered the Book; it was the symbol of divine authority and wisdom, the spiritual sword that defended and promoted its beliefs.

²³⁹ John Lowden, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (London, 1997) p. 200, pl. 111.

²⁴⁰ 'Priests are established as teachers for the unlearned people....' See Ælfric's preface to Genesis (ff. 1r-v) in the Old English Hexateuch (BL, Cotton MS Claudius B. iv), written in the second quarter of the eleventh century-second half of the twelfth century, at St Augustine's, Canterbury. See Dodwell, C. R., and Peter Clemoes, facsimile, eds., *The Old English Hexateuch: British Museum Cotton Claudius B. iv*, Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile, xvii (Copenhagen, 1974); Ælfric's Preface to Genesis is available in Richard Marsden, ed. *Old English Heptateuch and Ælfric's Libellus de Veteri Testamento et Novo*, vol. I, EETS, os 330 (Oxford, 2008), pp. 3-7. See also Jonathan Wilcox, ed. *Ælfric's Prefaces*, Durham Medieval Texts (Durham, 1994), pp. 116-119.

²⁴¹ In the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancto Cuthberti*, King Æthelstan holds a large, open book and St Cuthbert a small, closed one (fig. 1). In the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter three closed books are depicted, held by Christ in Majesty, King Edgar and St Peter respectively (fig. 4). In the prefatory miniature of the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, Christ in Majesty holds a large, open book, the monk in the middle of the choir a small open one and the Virgin Mary holds a small closed book in her left hand (fig. 7).

In other words the book acted as the *miles Christi* (soldier of Christ). The book as a manifestation of the Christian doctrine, symbol of spirituality, and divine revelation, is closely associated with literacy. Combining word and image books also functioned as pastors and teachers. Occasionally, they also took on a peripatetic character, since their sacred texts had the power to assemble people together, when church buildings were scarce.²⁴²

Michelle Brown has stressed the iconic status of the book, its efficacy as book-cum-relic, and as a vehicle for *meditatio*, prayerful reading and meditation upon scripture, and *contemplatio*, a revelatory glimpse of the vision of God to come. St Cuthbert's Gospel of St John (BL, Loan MS 74) placed in his coffin in 698 is an exemplar of the iconic status of a book-cum-relic (fig. 28a).²⁴³ Furthermore, as certain miracle-working books enjoyed sacred status and legendary fame, it is not surprising that the book was used in the legal system as a guarantor in oath swearing.²⁴⁴

God and the Book

The iconography of God holding the Book was adopted by all those who aspired to associate themselves with divine and sacred authorities by being portrayed like them. As St Augustine of Hippo said, '[t]his is the sum of religion to

²⁴² Michelle P. Brown 'In the Beginning was the Word': *Books and faith in the age of Bede*, The Jarrow Lecture, (Jarrow, 2000), p. 13.

²⁴³ In the twelfth century, the Cuthbert Gospel in a leather satchel was hung, as a special honour, around the neck of important visitors at Durham Cathedral. See Michelle P. Brown, 'In the Beginning was the Word', p. 11. See also, Dominic Marnier, *St Cuthbert: His Life and Cult in Medieval Durham* (London, 2000), pp. 22-23.

²⁴⁴ Michelle P. Brown, 'In the Beginning was the Word', pp. 9-13.

imitate whom thou dost worship.'²⁴⁵ Augustine's words are echoed by the depictions of sacred and secular authorities with books. Depicted holding a book the monks, the senior clergy, kings and important royal figures, male and female are presented as the spiritual and learned Christian elite. In this context the book, like the cross, as well as being a symbol of faith becomes a channel of intercession for the supplicant with the sacred and divine authorities.

The explicit relationship between God and the book is a visual reminder of the 'Eternal Word' as is stated in the incipit of John's gospel: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'²⁴⁶ During the Middle Ages this incipit used to be worn around the neck as a protective charm, because John's gospel was thought to be very efficacious in healing and protecting.²⁴⁷

In the Old English Hexateuch (BL, Cotton MS Claudius B. iv) God is depicted holding a book in almost all his encounters with the Israelite leaders. In some of the scenes God is also depicted holding a scroll.²⁴⁸ Typically in these encounters in Genesis and in Exodus God is depicted with a crossed nimbus and a

²⁴⁵ Henry Bettenson, trans., St Augustine of Hippo, *Concerning the City of God Against the Pagans* (Harmonsworth, 1985).

²⁴⁶ John 1:1.

²⁴⁷ Michelle P. Brown 'In the Beginning was the Word', p. 11.

²⁴⁸ In Genesis, God appears to Abraham to renew the covenant with him and descends the ladder holding a book. But when he meets Abraham on the ground he holds a scroll, with an inscription (fol. 29r; fig. 154). God again holds a golden scroll in both hands when he appears to Abraham before the sacrifice of Isaac (fol. 37v; fig. 159). For the use of speech scrolls in Anglo-Saxon art, see Meyer Schapiro, 'Script in Pictures: Semiotics of Visual language,' in *Words Script and Pictures: Semiotics of Visual Language* (New York, 1996), p. 165; and William Noel, 'The Utrecht Psalter in England,' in *The Utrecht Psalter in Medieval Art: Picturing the Psalms of David*, ed. Koert van der Horst, W. Noel, and W. C. M. Wüsterfeld (London, 1996), pp. 120-65, esp. 159-60.

beard, standing and holding a book, usually closed, in his left hand (figs. 153, 157, 160, 161).²⁴⁹

In the Old English Hexateuch (BL, Cotton MS Claudius B. iv), in the Creation, God is depicted seated in Majesty with a golden book in his left hand and blessing with the right (fol. 4v). When blessing Adam and Eve, God raises His book towards them as a cross or a banner probably suggesting the book's power as a sacred symbol of divine authority (fol. 6v; fig. 149).²⁵⁰ In Genesis in His encounters with Abraham, God appears again raising His book in the scene where He advises Abraham to leave the country (fol. 21r; fig. 155) as He does also where He makes a covenant with him and they are shaking hands (fol. 27r; fig. 158).²⁵¹ However, in both scenes God's closed book is not only raised like a cross but also bears the symbol of the cross on its cover. Thus, in combining the sign of the cross and the Word of God in its body, the book seals the covenant between God and Abraham with the two most powerful symbols of Christianity.

²⁴⁹ The Old English Hexateuch (BL, Cotton MS Claudius B. iv). *Enoch is taken up to heaven by God* (fol. 11v, fig. 153); *God appears to Abraham by descending a ladder* (fol. 29r, fig. 154); *God advises Abraham to leave his country* (fol. 21r, fig. 155); *God appears to Abraham* (fol. 26r, fig. 157); *God makes a covenant with Abraham* (fol. 27r, fig. 158); *God tells Noah to embark his passengers* (fol. 14r, fig. 160); *The Lord speaks to Moses on Mount Sinai* (fol. 105v, fig. 161); Christ is depicted the same way --nimbed, standing with a book in his left hand and a *virga* in his right hand-- in the early tenth century outline drawing (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auctarium F. iv 32, fol. 1; fig. 43) in which Dunstan is depicted kneeling before Him.

²⁵⁰ Withers offers an interesting argument on the way in which the book is carried by the Lord; see 'Audience, Literacy and the Social Roles of Reading and Writing', in *The Illustrated Old English Hexateuch*, Cotton Claudius B. iv: The Frontier of Seeing and Reading in Anglo-Saxon England (London, 2007), pp. 159-182.

²⁵¹ For the importance of the crosses for the story of Abraham, see David Johnson, 'A Program of Illumination in the Old English Illustrated Hexateuch: "Visual Typology?"', in Barnhouse and Withers, eds., *The Old English Hexateuch: Aspects and Approaches* (Kalamazoo, 2000), p. 190.

1.4.1 The Bibliophile King

The promotion of books and learning through Christianity undoubtedly influenced the iconography of Anglo-Saxon kingship. Spirituality and love for learning are explicit in all the prefatory miniatures with the strong presence of books and the representation of King Æthelstan and King Edgar holding books before sacred and divine authorities. The depiction of the Anglo-Saxon ruler holding a book affirms the ruler's literacy, piety and spirituality and thus becomes a vital instrument of royal propaganda. A pious and literate king is a wise king, who like King Solomon in Old Testament, would have God's blessing.

Charlemagne is established as a ruler who took a serious interest in scholarship, studying personally under the guidance of Paul the Deacon and Alcuin as well as promoting the liberal arts in the court and ordering his children and grandchildren to be well-educated. Although the emperor struggled with writing and could not read Latin, his exposure to the best scholars of the period gathered at his court endowed him with a very literate personality at a time when the oral tradition was still so strong that the law could be transmitted orally.²⁵² Accordingly, the picture of Charlemagne that Eginhard delivers to us is certainly not that of an 'unlearned' but rather that of a literate person.

In speech he was fluent and ready, and could express with the greatest clearness whatever he wished. He was not merely content with his

²⁵² Eginhard writes of the emperor: 'He paid the greatest attention to the liberal arts, and showed the greatest respect and bestowed high honours upon those who taught them. For his lessons in grammar he listened to the instruction of Deacon Peter of Pisa, an old man; but for all other subjects Albinus, called Alcuin, also a deacon, was his teacher—a man from Britain, of the Saxon race, and the most learned man of his time. Charles spent much time and labour in learning rhetoric and dialectic, and especially astronomy, from Alcuin. He learnt, too, the art of reckoning, and with close application scrutinised most carefully the course of the stars'. See Arthur J. Grant ed., *Early Lives of Charlemagne by Einhard and the Monk of St Gall* (London, 1966), p. 41-59.

native tongue but took the trouble to learn foreign languages. He learned Latin so well that he could speak it as well as his native tongue; but he could understand Greek better than he could speak it. His fluency of speech was so great that he even seemed sometimes a little garrulous.²⁵³

Charlemagne's great scholarly achievements, notwithstanding his failure at the practical skills of reading and writing, raise the question of the meaning of the word literacy in the Middle Ages.²⁵⁴ The definition of literacy, as the ability to read and write would not necessarily cover the range of degrees of literacy within medieval society.

Charlemagne's virtuosity in mnemonic discipline stands as a telling example of the power of the oral transmission of knowledge in the medieval period. As Michelle Brown suggests, literacy in the Middle Ages should 'be considered more broadly, to encompass the ability to retain a coherent body of cultural memory and to transmit it intact, through the spoken or written word, or images.'²⁵⁵

²⁵³ Eginhard tell us also that Charlemagne tried also 'to learn to write, and for this purpose used to carry with him and keep under the pillow of his couch tablets and writing-sheets that he might in his spare moments accustom himself to the formation of letters.' See A. J. Grant, ed., *Early Lives of Charlemagne by Einhard and the Monk of St Gall* (London, 1922), pp. 41-59.

²⁵⁴ Both this scholarly failure, as Einhard notes 'his effort came too late in life and achieved little success', was his inability to write: when in his old age he began attempts to learn—practicing, during his free time, in bed, the formation of letters on books and wax tablets he hid under his pillow—and his ability to read which Einhard was silent about and which no contemporary source supports—have been called into question. See J. Grant, ed., *Early Lives of Charlemagne*, pp. 41-59; R. McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity* (Cambridge, 2008).

²⁵⁵ See Michelle Brown, *The Book and the Transformation of Britain c.550-1050*, (London, 2011), pp. 7-11, esp., p. 8.

The importance of images and visual memory in the transmission of knowledge has also been stressed by Thomas Aquinas who notes that man became literate with the help of mental images, *phantasmata*, stored while reading.²⁵⁶ And Pope Gregory, in his letter of c. 600 to Bishop Serenus of Marseilles, defended such images:

It is one thing to adore a picture, another to learn what is to be adored through the history told by the picture. What Scripture presents to readers a picture presents to the gaze of the unlearned. For in it even the ignorant see what they ought to follow, in it the illiterate read.²⁵⁷

In the Anglo-Saxon period, King Alfred sets another important example of exercising political control through learning. With Asser's help, King Alfred began to read selected passages in Latin and translate them into English. Alfred's famous passage in the preface to his translation of Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis* states his attempt to reconstruct a Golden Age when kings 'upheld peace and morals and authority at home and also extended their territory abroad'.²⁵⁸ In his translation of *Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy*, King Alfred notes:

Now no man can administer government unless he has fit tools and the raw material to work upon... And a king's raw materials and instruments of rule are a well-peopled land, and he must have men of prayer, men of war and

²⁵⁶ Michelle Brown, *The Book and the Transformation of Britain c.550-1050*, pp. 85-99.

²⁵⁷ C. Chazelle, 'Pictures, Books and the Illiterate: Pope Gregory I's Letters to Serenus of Marseilles', *Word and Image* 6, no. 2 (1990), pp. 138-153; Michelle P. Brown, *The Book and the Transformation of Britain, c.550-1050*, pp. 85-99.

²⁵⁸ Henry Sweet, ed., *King's Alfred West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, EETS, 45, 50 (London, 1871), pp. 2-3.

men of work...without those tools he cannot perform any of the tasks entrusted to him.²⁵⁹

Alfred's approach to learning and governing could be seen as an example of the interrelation between two key models at the time; in Henry Loyn's words: 'Good kingship was Christian kingship. Successful kingship was Christian kingship'.²⁶⁰ And this is also suggested more explicitly in King Alfred's letter to Waerferth, Bishop of Worcester in 890 where the king expressed his desire to restore religion and learning once the kingdom had been saved from the Danes. The following extract shows how much Alfred valued learning and Christianity in kingship:

God Almighty be thanked that we have any teachers among us now. And therefore I command thee, as I believe thou wouldst, to free thyself from worldly matters and apply the wisdom which God has given thee as thou art able. Consider what punishment shall fall upon us for the sake of this world, if we have neither loved wisdom ourselves nor suffered other men to obtain it, if we have loved the name of Christian only, and very few of us its duties.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ King Alfred translated the *Consolation of Philosophy* written by the Roman philosopher Boethius (c. 475-525) in the first quarter of the 6th century when he was imprisoned in Ravenna. See W. E. Watts, ed. and trans., Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy* (London, 1969).

²⁶⁰ Henry Loyn, 'Church and State in England in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries' in *Tenth Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and Regularis Concordia*, ed. D. Parsons (Chistester, 1975), pp. 94-102.

²⁶¹ Robert Steele and Alexander Moring, eds., *King's Letters: From the Days of Alfred to the Coming of the Tutors*, vol. I (London, 1900), pp. 1-4; The letter is a preface to Alfred's translation of Pope Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis* and copies of it were addressed to other bishops. In the letter King Alfred stresses the duties of a Christian ruler: 'I let it be known to thee that it has very often come into my mind what wise men there formerly were throughout England, both church and lay folk, and how

Virtuous Women and the Book

Noble ninth-century women showed an interest in books and learning and were actively involved in the education of their children.²⁶² Such an example is the mother of King Alfred, Osburh or Osburga, who was the first wife of King Æthelwulf of Wessex. Asser, in his *Vita Alfredi* written in 893, describes her as the 'most religious woman, noble in character and noble by birth'.²⁶³ One day, Osburh set a challenge for Alfred and his brothers, offering a reward of a book of Saxon poems to whoever was able to memorise it first:

One day, therefore when his mother was showing him and his brothers a book of English poetry which she held in her hand, she said: 'I shall give this book to whichever one of you can learn it fastest'. Spurred on by these words, or rather by divine inspiration, and attracted by the beauty of the initial word in the book, Alfred spoke as follows in reply to his mother, forestalling his brothers (ahead in years, though not in ability): 'Will you really give this book to the one of us who can understand it the soonest and recite it to you?' Whereupon, smiling with pleasure she reassured him, saying: 'Yes, I will.' He immediately

happy times there were then throughout England, and how the kings who had power over the nation in those days obeyed God and His ministers, and preserved peace, morality, and order at home, and at the same time enlarged their territory abroad, and prospered both in war and in wisdom: and how zealous were God's ministers in teaching and in learning, and in all the services they owed Him: and how men came from overseas in search of wisdom and instruction, which we should now have to get from thence if we would have them.'

²⁶² Janet L. Nelson, 'Osburgh', *Oxford Online Dictionary of National Bibliography*, 2004. In Nelson's view, Osburh may have been dead by 856 or may have been repudiated.

²⁶³ Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, eds, and trans., *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondsworth, 1983), p. 68.

took the book from her hand, went to his teacher and learn it. When it was learnt, he took it back to his mother and recited it.²⁶⁴

The extract shows not only the importance of books and literacy for future kings but also the prominent role of the oral tradition since the skill of memorising was encouraged and highly regarded. It is noticeable in the extract that the best at memorising proved to be the youngest of Osburh's sons, Alfred, rather than the firstborn. The example suggests that literacy and spiritual gifts were admirable qualities for a successful king. Accordingly, the fact that Alfred was the best at memorising was a harbinger of his future as a great king. The story shows the interest of noble ninth-century women in books and literacy and their active involvement in the education of their children.²⁶⁵

The active role that educated Anglo-Saxon women played in the Church is also suggested in one of Ælfric's homilies, where he identifies Queen Emma with the Church or the visual representation of the Church with a female figure.²⁶⁶ Here, we should also recall the frontispiece of the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* (BL, MS Add. 33241, fol.1v) where the enthroned Anglo-Saxon Queen Emma receives the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* from its author, with two young men standing next to her, most likely her sons, Harthacnut and Edward (fig. 36). Even seated, the queen is much bigger than the other figures. The author, a tonsured monk, is

²⁶⁴ See Asser, *Life of King Alfred*, ed. W. H. Stevenson (Oxford, 1904), p. 20; S. Keynes and M. Lapidge eds. and trans., *Alfred the Great*, p.75. Osburh has not witnessed any charters and there is no mention of her in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. She was the mother of all Æthelwulf's children, his five sons Æthelstan, Æthelbald, Æthelberht, Æthelred and Alfred the Great, and his daughter Æthelswith, wife of King Burgred of Mercia. Osburh presumably died before 856, when her husband married the Carolingian princess Judith.

²⁶⁵ Janet Nelson, 'Osburgh', *Oxford Online Dictionary of National Bibliography*, 2004. In Nelson's view, Osburh may have been dead by 856 or may have been repudiated.

²⁶⁶ Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., 'On the Dedication of the Church', *The Homilies of Ælfric* (London, 1844-6), pp. 585-587.

kneeling in front of the queen, handing the book to her. The book is open with its folios facing the viewer and carried with a special cloth under it. The queen places her hands on the open book while her two crowned sons, on the right, look on. Here, Emma is portrayed as a learned queen standing also as an example of a noble mother who promotes literacy and is interested in the education of her children, the future kings.

Emma recalls the examples set by the mother of Saint Augustine of Hippo, Monica, and Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine the Great. The active role that high-status mothers had in the education of their children, as well as their close relation to the church, seem to have a long tradition, as shown in the case of Constantine the Great and his mother Helena in the fourth century, who later became a saint.

Monica, the fourth-century mother of Augustine of Hippo, is represented an ideal Christian mother who gives her son, Augustine, a Christian education and enrolls him with the catechumens. With a character which embodied all Christian virtues, Monica even manages to have her cruel pagan husband, Patricius, baptized before he died. Like Helena, Monica became a saint, as did her daughter Perpetua. St Augustine's fondness for his mother and her influence in his religious education is expressed in his writings:

From my tenderest infancy, I had in a manner sucked with my mother's milk that name of my Saviour, Thy Son; I kept it in the recesses of my heart; and all that presented itself to me without that Divine Name,

though it might be elegant, well written, and even replete with truth, did not altogether carry me away.²⁶⁷

1.4.2 The Bibliophile Church

The book as miles Christi

In the Anglo-Saxon period literacy in England was the monopoly of the clergy. Books were written, copied, read and preserved mainly in monasteries.²⁶⁸ Benedict Biscop's library had been founded at least as early as his third trip to Rome from England around 671, during which he also collected books in Gaul:

He brought back a large number of books on all branches of sacred knowledge, some bought at a favourable price, others the gift of well wishers. At Vienne on the journey home he picked up the books he had left there in the care of his friends.²⁶⁹

On his fifth journey to Rome, around 685, Benedict Biscop returned with '... a large supply of sacred books and no less a stock of sacred pictures than on previous journeys.' When Ceolfrith assumed the abbacy of the monastic foundations of Monkwearmouth and Jarrow, he continued expanding the libraries of both monasteries following the example of Benedict Biscop:

²⁶⁷ R. S. Pine-Coffin, trans., Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, I, iv (London, 1961)

²⁶⁸ Patrick Wormald, 'The Uses of Literacy in Anglo-Saxon England and its Neighbours', TRHS, 5th series, 27 (1977), p. 113; See also Michelle P. Brown, 'What does "Literacy" Mean in this Period?' and 'Creating communities of reading' in *The Book and the Transformation of Britain c. 550-1050*, (London, 2011), pp. 7-11 and 57-85.

²⁶⁹ Bede, *Lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*, ch. 6. See D. H. Farmer, ed., *The Age of Bede* (revd. edn, Harmondsworth, 1983), pp. 190-191; Michelle P. Brown, ' "In the Beginning was the Word" books and faith in the age of Bede', Jarrow Lecture, 2000.

He doubled the number of books in the libraries of both monasteries with an ardour equal to that which Benedict had shown in founding them. He added three copies of the new translation of the Bible to the one copy of the old translation which he had brought back from Rome. One of these he took with him as a present when he went back to Rome in his old age, and the other two he bequeathed to his monasteries. For eight hides of land by the River Fresca he exchanged with King Aldfrid, who was very learned in the scriptures, the magnificently worked copy of the Cosmographers which Benedict had bought in Rome.²⁷⁰

Scriptoria and Books

Manuscript production is closely linked with monastic scriptoria, where monks, working as artists or scribes, created miniatures and wrote or copied texts. When the Utrecht Psalter was at Christ Church Canterbury from the end of the tenth century, its drawings were carefully studied by the monks and copied in three single versions between 1000 and 1200.²⁷¹ The production of manuscripts was mainly sustained by ecclesiastical and royal patronage, the vast majority of them being created in monastic scriptoria and for the use of the Church.²⁷² Archaeological excavations have confirmed the existence of a prosperous workshop at Winchester whose artefacts feature stylistic similarities with the local manuscript illumination.²⁷³

²⁷⁰ Bede, *Lives of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow*, ch. 6. See D. H. Farmer, ed., *The Age of Bede* (revd. edn, Harmondsworth, 1983), p. 36.

²⁷¹ Charles R. Dodwell, *The Pictorial Arts of the West 800-1200* (New Haven, 1993), p. 100.

²⁷² See T. A. Heslop, 'The Production of de luxe Manuscripts and the Patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma', in *ASE* 19 (Cambridge 1999), pp. 151-91.

²⁷³ Mary F. Smith, Robin Fleming and Patricia Halpin 'Court and Piety in Late Anglo-Saxon Illumination', *The Catholic Historical Review* 87:4 (2001), p. 575.

However, it seems likely that not only regular monks were experienced artists and scribes. Late Anglo-Saxon episcopal hagiographies occasionally portray bishops—including Dunstan, Æthelwold and Spearhavo—as skilled artists and craftsmen.²⁷⁴ There are strong arguments supporting the view that Archbishop Dunstan—a metal and textile worker—personally created the line drawing in St Dunstan's Classbook, which depicts the saint at the foot of Christ (Oxford, Bodleian MS Auct. F. 4.32, fol. 1; fig. 43).²⁷⁵ According to contemporary sources, Bishop Æthelwold made gold and silver crosses, a turning wheel with lamps and bells and an organ.²⁷⁶ Moreover, Bishop Spearhavo was sufficiently skilful to become Edward the Confessor's goldsmith.

Cura Pastoralis

The Church was also responsible for the instruction of the clergy and the laity. In the preface to Genesis, in the Old English Hexateuch, Ælfric reminds the priests of their teaching responsibilities.

Priests are established as teachers for the unlearned people. Now it would befit them that they knew how to understand the Old Law spiritually and what Christ himself taught and his apostles in the New Testament, in order that they might properly guide the people to believe in God and properly set an example in good works.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁴ See *Memorials of St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs, RS 63 (London, 1874), pp. 20-1; Mary Frances Smith, 'Court and Piety in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Catholic Historical Review* (2001), pp. 570-9.

²⁷⁵ It is said that Dunstan was an expert in the use of gold, silver, bronze and iron; see *Memorials of St Dunstan*, ed. W. Stubbs, p. 79; *St Dunstan: Christ as the personification of wisdom* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. F. 4.32, fol. 1) 943-4/57.

²⁷⁶ Joseph Stevenson, ed., *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, RS, 2 vols (London, 1858).

²⁷⁷ B. Withers, *The Illustrated Old English Hexateuch, Cotton Claudius B.iv.: The Frontier of Seeing and Reading in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 2007), p. 143. See also Timothy Graham, 'Early Modern

Pope Gregory in the *Cura Pastoralis* and Archbishop Wulfstan shared the same views on the duties of an ideal bishop. According to Gregory, 'the ideal bishop was both a ruler and teacher.'²⁷⁸ Archbishop Wulfstan repeated the same ideas: 'First to his prayers and then to his book-work, Reading or writing, teaching or learning ... And also it is seemly that he teach God's law, Portion it to the folk Often and frequently at the courts'.²⁷⁹ The close relationship between the Church and literacy is visually stressed in the iconography of miniatures portraying the clergy carrying books, reading, writing and teaching.

However not all monks were able to read and understand Latin. Concerned about the education of the clergy, King Alfred sent a copy of his translation of *Cura Pastoralis* to every cathedral church in his kingdom. In his insistence on the bishop's responsibility for the instruction of the laity, the king echoed the views of Pope Gregory in the *Cura Pastoralis*.²⁸⁰

Æthelwold himself translated the *Rule of St Benedict* into English for novices and monks whose Latin was not sufficiently good to follow the original.²⁸¹ Glosses on the text of that the tenth- to eleventh-century manuscripts of Prudentius's, *Psychomachia*, suggest that they might have been used for teaching purposes.²⁸² Ælfric in the *Life of St Æthelwold* presented Æthelwold not only as a fervent

Users of Claudius B. iv: Robert Talbot and William L' Isle', in *The Old English Hexateuch: Aspects and Approaches*, ed. Rebecca Barnhouse and Benjamin Withers (Kalamazoo, 2000) pp. 271-316.

²⁷⁸ Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1971), p. 272.

²⁷⁹ Karl Jöst, ed., Wulfstan, *Die Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical: Ein Werk Erzbischof Wulfstans von York* (Bern, 1959), pp.75-7.

²⁸⁰ Stenton 1971, p. 272.

²⁸¹ Christopher Hohler, 'Some Service Books of the Later Saxon Church', in *Tenth Century Studies*, ed. David Parsons (Chichester, 1975), p. 74.

²⁸² See Gernot Wieland, 'Gloss and Illustration: Two Means to the same End?', in *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts and Their Heritage*, eds. Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine M. Treharne (Aldershot and Brookfield, 1998), pp. 1-20.

preacher of the gospel, inspired by St Swithin, but also a devoted teacher, who constantly encouraged his pupils and even translated books into English for them.²⁸³

Byrhtferth, in the *Life of St Oswald*, praises St Oswald's eagerness to teach his own people what he had learned abroad.²⁸⁴ The saint's talent in music is compared with that of King David.²⁸⁵ Oswald is also praised by Byrhtferth for helping and encouraging the monks to balance their material and spiritual needs, impressing on them the importance of education through the use of hymns, songs and reading.²⁸⁶ Byrhtferth even compares Saint Oswald to Solomon in that he stresses the importance of reading the sacred texts after praying:

²⁸³ Æthelwold was in King Edgar's confidence, prevailing nobly in word and deed, preaching everywhere the gospel of Christ according to the admonition of the prophet Isaiah, who says: "Cry, cease not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their wicked deeds, and the house of Jacob their sins"; His preaching was greatly assisted by St Swithin, who was translated at that same time. For it was perceived that what Æthelwold taught by words, Swithin adorned wonderfully by miracles 'It was always a pleasure to him to teach young men and boys, and to explain books to them in English and with kindly exhortations to encourage them to better things. From this it came upon that several of his pupils were made abbots and bishops in the English people'; Ælfric's *Life of St Æthelwold*, in *English Historical Documents*, ed. D. Whitelock, pp. 903-11, at 908.

²⁸⁴ 'According to the custom of monastic law, he [Oswald] began to memorize and duly to master the monastic offices, desiring with the Lord's merciful support-to teach those things which he had learned from strangers abroad to his own people at home'. See Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *Vita S. Oswaldi: The Life of St Oswald*, in *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgbine*, ed. and trans., Michael Lapidge (Oxford, 2009), iii. 3, p. 55.

²⁸⁵ 'Taking up the five-stringed harp of the great king David, he was accustomed to offer songs- 'in detail and in particular' to the highest Trinity and undivided Unity. The tireless psalmist never allowed his plectrum to rest; rather, on bended knees, just as the many devout monks who usually pray for their sins one hundred times a day and one hundred times each night, so too Oswald, bending his knees, was found deserving of the forgiveness and favour of eternal blessing from Jesus on high, which he could not lose in his present life nor in the future world'. See Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth, *The Life of St Oswald*, p. 55, iii. 2.

²⁸⁶ See Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth, *The Life of St Oswald*, iii. 9, p. 71.

When his prayers were duly completed, he [Oswald] was revived with divine reading; thus was he daily stuffed with splendid feasts, watered by the health-bearing cup of Solomon, and perfused with nectar-like and ambrosian fragrance, saying with the psalmist: 'In me, God, are your prayers, the praises which I shall return to you.'²⁸⁷

In the ninth-century *Rule of St Ferreolus*, it is strongly advised that a monk 'must also hold all the Psalms in his memory' and it is likely that, after two or three years of chanting them through each week, most monks would have learned them by heart. The important role of the psalms in the education of the clergy and the laity is also emphasised in Ælfric's homily 'Of the Catholic Faith': 'Every Christian man should by right now know both his Pater noster and his Creed.'²⁸⁸

It has also been suggested that the Utrecht illustrations may have been used as a mental tool to help the monks to memorise the psalms.²⁸⁹ The efficacy of images for educational purposes had already been stressed by Pope Gregory. The two letters from Pope Gregory to an iconoclastic bishop, in 599 and 600, give the two main reasons for the presence of religious images in churches: first of all, pictures can teach '[p]ainted likenesses (are) made for the instruction of the ignorant, so that they might understand the stories and so learn what occurred...What scripture is to the educated, images are to the ignorant...they read in them what they cannot read in books.' Secondly, they can stimulate-religious

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, ii, 7, p. 47.

²⁸⁸ Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., 'Of the Catholic Faith', *The Homilies of Ælfric* (London, 1844-6), p. 275.

²⁸⁹ Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: a study of memory in medieval culture* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 226; C. M. Kauffmann, 'Psalms', in *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550*, (London, 2003), p. 112.

emotions '[f]rom the sight of the events portrayed (people) should catch the ardour of compunction'.²⁹⁰

Teaching was not only confined in the monasteries. Evidence shows that the Church was involved in the education of the laity too. Ælfric provides evidence for lay patronage as it is known that his original version of Genesis was written for the Ealdorman Æthelweard. Later, the ealdorman's son Æthelmaer also became Ælfric's patron. Furthermore, Ælfric's letter in the Old and New Testament was addressed to Sigeweard of East Heolon and he also wrote for two other laymen, Wulfgeat and Sigeferth.²⁹¹

1.5 The Role of the Old Testament Monarchy in Anglo-Saxon Genealogies and the Bearded Anglo-Saxon King

1.5.1 'And Isaac Begat' ²⁹²

As has already been stressed, the Old Testament stories had great appeal for the Anglo-Saxons.²⁹³ Thacker notes that Bede, like Gregory, viewed Anglo-

²⁹⁰ Gregory's text is in *Epistolae*, (IX. 209 and XI. 10) see *S. Gregorii Magni Registrum epistolarum libri VIII-XIV*, ed. D. Norberg, CCSL 140, 140A (Appendix) (Turnhout, 1982); English translation in Caecilia Davis-Weyer, *Early Medieval Art, 300-1150* (Toronto, 1986), p. 47f. For the literature on the image debate at this period, see Ernst Kitzinger, 'The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954), pp. 83-150; for Gregory's dictum see Herbert Kessler, 'Pictures as Scripture in Fifth-Century Churches', in *Studia Atrium Orientalis et Occidentalis* 2 (1985), pp. 17-30; Lawrence Duggan, 'Was Art really the "book of the illiterate"?', in *Word and Image*, 5 (3) (1989): 227-51, Celia Chazelle, 'Pictures, Books and the Illiterate: Pope Gregory I's Letters to Serenus of Marseilles', in *Word and Image* 6 (1990), pp.138-53; Claus M. Kauffmann, 'Introduction', in *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550* (London, 2003), pp. ix-x; See Caecilia Weyer, *Early Medieval Art, 300-1150* (Toronto, 1986), pp. 99-103, For the medieval West, the ninth-century *Libri Carolini* did not promote images to be used as a teaching aid, but it was Gregory who remained the standard authority. See A. Freeman, ed., *Libri Carolini*, MGH, Legum section III, *Concilia* (Hannover, 1998).

²⁹¹ See Claus M. Kauffman, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550* (London, 2003), p. 69; James Hurt, *Ælfric*, Twayne's English authors series, 131 (New York, 1972), p. 38.

²⁹² Gen. 25:19; Matt. 1:2.

Saxon history within an Old Testament mind set.²⁹⁴ For Bede the Anglo-Saxons were God's elect people but who had, like the Israelites, wandered away from the path of righteousness.²⁹⁵ Unsurprisingly, Bede often drew parallels between the Anglo-Saxons and the Israelites and the structure of his *Historia Ecclesiastica* follows that of the Old Testament.²⁹⁶ In *Historia Ecclesiastica* there is an account of the miraculous way Cædmon attained his gift of composing and singing verses.²⁹⁷ Just as in the case of King David, Cædmon's poetic talent was God's gift, a result of divine intervention.²⁹⁸

²⁹³ The Carolingians were also fascinated by the biblical stories. Just as Alcuin compared Charlemagne to King David, so they loved to claim that they were the reincarnation of Old Testament kings. See Claus Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550* (London, 2003), p. 36; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 98-106; Donald Bullough, *The Age of Charlemagne* (London 1965), p. 165.

²⁹³ Claus Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550* (London, 2003), p. 36; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 98-106; Donald Bullough, *The Age of Charlemagne* (London 1965), p. 165. See also Herbert Broderich, 'Some Attitudes towards the Frame in Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries', *Artibus et Historiae*, III /5 (1992), pp. 31-42.

²⁹⁴ Alan Thacker, 'Bede's Ideal of Reform', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*, ed., P. Wormald et al. (Oxford 1983), p. 142.

²⁹⁵ See Alan Thacker 'Bede's Ideal of Reform' pp. 142, 143 in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society. Studies presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*, ed. P. Wormald et al., Oxford 1983; Robert Hanning, *Vision of History in Early Britain* (New York, 1966), pp. 63-90; Judith McClure 'Bede's Old Testament Kings', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*, Patrick Wormald, ed. et al (Oxford, 1983), pp. 82-96.

²⁹⁶ C. Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550* p. 36; J. McClure, 'Bede's Old Testament Kings', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*, ed. P. Wormald et al. (Oxford 1983), pp. 76-98, esp. p. 87 f.; Nicholas Howe, *Migration and Myth Making in Anglo-Saxon England* (New Haven, 1989), pp. 35 and 39-71.

²⁹⁷ Caedmon was an illiterate herdsman. One day when he was asleep God appeared to him and asked him to sing in His praise. Soon Hilda, the abbess of Whitby, accepted Caedmon into the monastic community, where he composed poems on the events of the Old and New Testament. Caedmon's name had been closely associated with the writer of the poems in Junius 11. See Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, ed. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: 1969; reprinted with corrections, 1991); trans. J. McClure and R. Collins in *Bede: Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1994), IV. 24.

²⁹⁸ Old Testament, Genesis

Byrhtferth in the *Life of St Oswald* repeatedly juxtaposes Oswald with Moses, and also Joshua, Jacob, Solomon, and the saint's companions at Ramsey with the Israelites.²⁹⁹ Accordingly, St Oswald's talent in music was compared with that of King David:

Taking up the five-stringed harp of the great king David, he was accustomed to offer songs 'in detail and in particular' to the highest Trinity and undivided Unity. The tireless psalmist never allowed his plectrum to rest; rather, on bended knees, just as the many devout monks who usually pray for their sins one hundred times a day and one hundred times each night, so too Oswald, bending his knees, was found deserving of the forgiveness and favour of eternal blessing from Jesus on high, which he could not lose in his present life nor in the future world.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ *The Life of St Oswald*, p. 41, ii.5 'Oswald the excellent Israelite, presented the gifts which he had brought with him in the presence of all the monks; the gifts were received inexpressibly by everyone and were praised by all with marvellous eloquence, since they were immense and well worthy of devout esteem. Then the intelligent recruit [Oswald], standing before all the monks of that holy monastery, and like the renowned leader [Moses], standing before the Pharaoh of the Nilotic kingdom, spoke as follows from his holy mouth.'; *ibid* p.35, ii. 2. 'Thus Oswald shone under the protection of his holy kinsman, just as Joshua under the excellent Moses, who [Joshua] gleamed as the second-in-command on the summit of Jordan.' (Joshua defeats the Amalekites under the protection of Moses (Exod. 17: 9-14); 'The beloved patriarch Jacob went down to Egypt with seventy souls; but our patriarch, enjoying even greater distinction, went down to the island [Ramsey] replete with every sort of beauty. Jacob came with his fleshy sons to the king of the kingdom of Nile; Oswald with his spiritual [sons] came to the kingdom of the Lord, concerning which the psalm of David sings, 'The Lord hath reigned, let the earth rejoice; let many islands be glad.' The Egyptian king persecuted Jacob's good people; the devil, who is the king of all wicked, persecuted Oswald's people. The 'Promised Land' was promised to Jacob's people; the glory of the heavenly kingdom was promised to Oswald's if they kept the decrees of St Benedict in the monastery'

³⁰⁰ See M. Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth, *The Life of St Oswald*, M. Lapidge, p. 55, iii. 2.

Humbling himself before God, Oswald sought Jesus's favour and eternal blessing. The iconography in miniatures with Rabanus Maurus kneeling before Christ Crucified, Dunstan before Christ Charles the Bald, the lost miniature of King Æthelstan kneeling before St Cuthbert in Cotton MS Otho B.ix, suggests that the suppliant adopted the bowing, kneeling or prostrating posture to humble himself before the Divine when seeking intercession.

Keeping Byrhtferth's account in mind, it is little wonder that Godden argues that 'for the Anglo-Saxons the Old Testament was a veiled way of talking about themselves'.³⁰¹ The Anglo-Saxons' identification with the Israelites was more evident during periods of crisis, such as the migration period, from the Continent to England, and during the fight against the Viking raids.³⁰² Certain passages in the Old Testament encouraged the Anglo-Saxons in their struggle against the Vikings.³⁰³ Ælfric used passages of the Old Testament, especially the books of Judith and Maccabees, to encourage his congregation at the time of the Danish invasions.³⁰⁴ Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, in one of his homilies, used the Babylonian captivity as an exemplar for the Danish Invasions.³⁰⁵ Accordingly, in the poem Exodus in Junius 11, the Israelites are not presented as slaves but as brave warriors like the Anglo-Saxons.³⁰⁶ Furthermore, David Bernstein suggests

³⁰¹ M. Godden and M. Lapidge, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 225.

³⁰² Claus Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550*, p. 36.

³⁰³ Claus Kauffman, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England*, p. 57.

³⁰⁴ '...translated into English, according to my skill, for your example, that you men may also defend your country by force of arms against the invasion of a foreign host', see Samuel John Crawford and N. R. Ker., eds. *Treatise on the Old and New Testament* (London, 1969), pp. 48 and 50.

³⁰⁵ '...let a heathen army come and plunder the land', see M. Godden and M. Lapidge, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 225 and p. 222f.

³⁰⁶ When Moses bade the earls with brazen trumpets muster the folk, bade warriors rise and don their coats of mail, bear shining arms, take thought on valour, and summon the multitude with signal beacons into the sandy shore of the sea (Exodus: 215-20).

that a parallel is drawn between the Norman Conquest and the Babylonian Captivity, which might explain certain scenes in the Bayeux Tapestry.³⁰⁷

Old Testament books, such as the Hexateuch, were translated into Old English and several riddles were inspired by the story of Lot and his family.³⁰⁸ In *Beowulf* there is a reworking of the Biblical Creation in which Cain is presented as the cause of all evils.³⁰⁹ Furthermore, in Junius 11 the story of Genesis, Exodus and Daniel were written in poetic form. This again suggests that the Old Testament stories were very popular with Anglo-Saxon audiences. The fact that the Psalms were translated into the Old English for the secular clergy and the laity and that King Alfred himself translated the first fifty psalms shows their popularity among the Anglo-Saxons.

Genealogies in the Bible

In the Scriptures there is a repetitive and obvious preoccupation with genealogies. Jesus' genealogy can be found in both the gospel of Matthew and of Luke.³¹⁰ In Matthew's gospel it starts with Abraham and lists his descendants all the way down to Jesus.³¹¹ Jesus is called the 'son of David', a clear reference to his

³⁰⁷ David J. Bernstein, *The Mystery of the Bayeux Tapestry* (Chicago, 1986), pp. 166-95.

³⁰⁸ Solomon Schechter, 'The Riddles of Solomon in Rabbinic literature' *Folklore*, 1, 1890, pp. 349-58, esp. p. 354.

³⁰⁹ David Wright, trans., *Beowulf: A Prose Translation* (Harmondsworth, 1957).

³¹⁰ Matt. 1:2-16 and Luke 3:23-38. In Matthew there are forty one generations in total, divided into three sections of fourteen generations as follows: from Abraham to David, from David until the carrying away into Babylon, from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ. The genealogy in Luke contains seventy seven generations. The two genealogies do not trace the same lineage. It seems that in Matthew's Jesus's ancestors are traced through his 'father' Joseph and in Luke through his mother.

³¹¹ Matt. 1:2-16

right to inherit David's throne.³¹² Only Matthew's genealogy mentions Solomon and the kings after him. This 'royal line' shows the legal right to David's throne that goes down to Joseph, whose adoption of Jesus made him the heir to David's kingdom. The genealogy in Luke's gospel starts with Jesus and carries his line back to Adam.³¹³

Genealogies had a significant presence in the pagan world and northern mythology. However, it was the Old Testament model of presenting genealogies that was most closely followed by the Anglo-Saxons, to the extent that the Old Testament became a storehouse for the genealogies of the Anglo-Saxon kings. For example King Æthelwulf, the father of King Alfred, traced his ancestry back via Woden to the patriarchs in Genesis, from Noah and Lamech to Adam.³¹⁴

The *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* contains lists with the names of the popes (ff. 59-60), lists of archbishops and bishops (ff. 61-64v), regnal lists and royal genealogies (ff. 65-67). Likewise, the New Minster *Liber Vitae* includes a list with kings of the West Saxons (fol. 14), episcopal lists (ff. 14v-17), the royal saints of Kent (ff. 34v-36v) and West Saxon regnal lists (fol. 39rv).

³¹² See Matt. 1:1. In 2 Sam. 7:12-17 Prophet Nathan tells David that his kingdom would remain forever and his royal line would go through the son who would build the Temple. In 1 Chr. 22:7-10 we read this son of David is Solomon.

³¹³ Luke 3:23-38.

³¹⁴ Claus M. Kauffman, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England*, p. 33; M. Larès, *Bible et Civilisation Anglaise* (Montreal, 1974), pp. 28-34; Kenneth Sisam, 'Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 39 (1953), pp. 287-346, esp. p. 299f. and 320; D. N. Dumville, 'Kingship Genealogies and Royal Lists', in *Early Medieval Kingship*, eds. P. H. Sawyer, and I. N. Wood (Leeds, 1977), pp. 72-104.

The Role of genealogies

Genealogies helped rulers to consolidate their power with the creation of a line of continuation and consequently also helped the leader to differentiate and reassure his people.

The Anglo-Saxons kings tried to link their name with the line of a great ancestor as far back in time as possible, even if in reality the claim could never stand. In the eyes of the people the ideal king was a hero, expected to descend from a heroic lineage. A glorious background and a strong genealogy made a king powerful, trustworthy and honoured.

In the Roman period there were lists of consuls and emperors. Papal lists developed in great detail as well. Patrick Wormald suggests a relationship between kings lists, genealogies and legislation since many Frankish, Visigothic and Lombardic legal manuscripts feature kings lists. Moreover, Alfred's law-book contains, along with the *Chronicle*, a West Saxon king-list and genealogy.³¹⁵ David Dumville argues that in the early medieval period the Celtic countries probably had professional secular learned men to keep the genealogies while in the Christian period this task was assumed by the Church.³¹⁶

In the *Historia Ecclesiastica* Bede refers to those who were involved in the recording of regnal lists: 'how those whose job it was to keep regnal lists decided to exclude the apostate successors of Edwin from their recordings.' But it is not clear whether they were clerics or *laici*.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ See Patrick Wormald, '*Lex Scripta and Verbum Regis: Legislation and Germanic Kingship, from Euric to Cnut*', in *Early Medieval Kingship*, eds. P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds, 1977), p. 134.

³¹⁶ David Dumville, 'Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal lists' in *Early Medieval Kingshi*, eds., P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds, 1977), pp. 102-104.

³¹⁷ D. Dumville, 'Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal lists', pp. 102-104; Bede in *HE*, iii. 1 'So all those who compute the dates of kings have decided to abolish the memory of those perfidious kings and

Genealogy allowed the ruling dynasties to present the past and thus to organise the future on their own conditions. David Dumville stresses that genealogies were subject to manipulation and that occasionally they might have been invented, changed or obscured. For example, such a manufactured continental pedigree was produced by Cassiodorus for Theodoric, the Ostrogoth king of Italy in the early sixth century, or for his grandson Athalaric.³¹⁸ Furthermore, manipulation of Irish pedigrees by propagandist genealogists sought to give the Dal Cais kings genealogical legitimacy, in their usurped status as provincial overlords, by falsely claiming that the Dal Cais belonged to the same dynasty as their Eoganacht predecessors.³¹⁹ Finding justification in biblical precedents the Church was also responsible for cultivating Germanic royal pedigrees in order to present an aristocratic descent.³²⁰ Excerpts from the *Historia Ecclesiastica* are followed by episcopal and regnal lists. Already in 731, Bede had recorded the descent of the Kentish kings from Woden.³²¹

Similarly, since King Offa was neither the son nor the grandson of a king, he had to fight his way to the throne claiming descent from the Mercian royal line.

to assign this year to their successor Oswald, a man beloved of God. Bede plainly knew the Northumbrian list which makes its first appearance in 737 as an addendum to the Moore manuscript of his History, and says of it that the Northumbrian royal family starts with Ida. See Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, eds. *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), V. 24, recap., it includes kings who are genealogically unplaced.

³¹⁸ D. Dumville, 'Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal lists', pp. 93-95 and J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford, 1971), p. 197: 9.

³¹⁹ D. Dumville, 'Kingship, Genealogies and Regnal lists', p. 82.

³²⁰ See for example, Genesis V and Luke III. 23-28. See also I Timothy 1.4, 'Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which beget controversies'. See Matt. xxiii. 9—'Call no man your Father, which is Heaven'. See V. E. Nash-Williams, *The Early Christian Monuments of Wales* (Cardiff, 1950), p. 96.

³²¹ *HE* ch. xv; See Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, eds. *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 49-53.

During his reign, an impressive genealogy was produced which traced the royal line back to Offa king of the Angles.³²²

In the ninth century, the West-Saxon dynasty consolidated its newly acquired power in England by incorporating into it royal genealogies, mythical and heroic figures from the Germanic pagan world, combining them with a biblical ancestry going back to Adam.³²³ In the ninth century there also occur collections of genealogies of saints. During this period, it is noticeable that in order to strengthen the saint's heroic status with an aristocratic background, the saints' Lives often start with a genealogy.³²⁴ This suggests that the deliberate and repeated use of genealogy was intended as a means of identity and declaration of authority in all aspects of cultural life. For example when Ælfric in his homilies refers to the great scholars of the past, and quotes from them repetitively, he creates a line, a genealogy of learning, an oral library worth studying and assimilated by any aspiring scholar in his congregation.

In the Old English Hexateuch (BL, Cotton MS Claudius B. iv), genealogies in Genesis are visually expressed through scenes of the patriarch's family life and burial rites, often housed in the same illustration. The family scenes appear on the top left and the burial of the patriarch follows next. This is shown in a miniature (fol. 11v) which depicts Jared with his family on the left and his death on the right, whereas on the lower left of the illustration is depicted Enoch with his family (fig. 153).

³²² David. N. Dumville, 'The Anglian collection of Royal genealogies and Regnal Lists', *ASE* 5 (1976), pp. 23-50. Dumville argues that a Northumbrian origin is more probable than a Mercian for the whole collection. See Kenneth Sisam, 1953. 'Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies' in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 39 (1953), pp. 287-348.

³²³ See K. Sisam, 'Anglo-Saxon Royal Genealogies', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 39 (1953), p. 95.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

Occasionally, the composition, divided into registers, contains family scenes and death of more than one patriarch. For example, Adam and Eve are depicted with their son Seth at the top left of the miniature while the burial of Adam is depicted on the right. In the middle register, Seth is portrayed with his family on the left while the next scene shows his burial. At the bottom register Enos is depicted with his family (left) and (right) his burial (fol. 10v). Typically, in family scenes, the patriarch is depicted seated in his household with his wife and children next to him. The miniature in folio 45v shows in three scenes three successive generations: Jacob with his two sons borne by Leah's maid, Jacob and Leah with their daughter and fifth and sixth sons, and Jacob and Rachel with their son.

In the Old English Hexateuch a series of dead, shrouded bodies parade horizontally, like parcels, from one folio to the next. This obsession with death does not seem to focus on the macabre aspect of it, but seems rather to show a peaceful transition to afterlife; since the patriarch has left his children behind and the circle of genealogy, the circle of life and death is not disturbed. What is stressed and celebrated here is the power of the genealogy, expressed with the circle of life, constantly flowing from birth to death to the point that death seems annihilated. A miniature in the Old English Old English Hexateuch (fol. 139v) depicts Moses blessing the tribes of Israel, then above Moses is shown the Promised Land from Mount Nabo where, on the left of the scene, he dies and is buried; and in the centre the Israelites mourn for him (fig. 162).

In Junius 11 or the Caedmon Genesis (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11) the mood is different. The artist firmly concentrates on the presentation of the genealogies through family group portraits, avoiding any visual reference to

death.³²⁵ Once more, the stability of the family life is stressed within the flow of the generations, without changes in iconography but only in the names of the patriarchs. Like a genealogy list, this expresses the desire for an uninterrupted line of social hierarchy and government, which preserves and transmits well-established principles and values.

The iconography of the prefatory miniatures in *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* and the New Minster *Liber Vitae* shares the same ideology that runs through the royal lists and genealogies recorded in their manuscripts. The Anglo-Saxon king, joining himself in the long line of successful rulers, presents himself like his predecessors as a pious Christian king, God's elect, in a plea for salvation. Accordingly, King Alfred's Christian ideals are transmitted in the royal iconography of Æthelstan in *Vitae Sancto Cuthberto* and from there to Edgar's New Minster and Cnut's *Liber Vitae* in an uninterrupted iconographical line.

1.5.2 The Bearded Anglo-Saxon King

In the three prefatory miniatures the Anglo-Saxon kings, Æthelstan, Edgar and Cnut, are depicted bearded, following most likely biblical, certain Roman and Byzantine prototypes. The earliest large-scale representation on sculpture of a bearded English ruler, with a rich moustache, is the mounted image possibly of King Æthelbald of Mercia c.716–757 on the Repton Stone (Derby Museum; fig. 71). The king is depicted in armour, with a sword, shield, and a diadem around his

³²⁵ In Junius 11, Adam is seated on a cushioned seat at the birth of Abel, p. 47. Then the same setting is applied to Enoch and his wife with his son Irad (Junius 11, p. 51). Another outline drawing shows the birth of Irad/Jared's son, Irad's wife and the midwife. In the middle of the illustration there is depicted the son of Irad with his wife and Methusael/Mathusal or Malalehel. It follows the depiction of Lamech with his two wives, Ada and Zilla, p. 53.

head.³²⁶ In the frontispiece of the *Regularis Concordia* (BL, Cotton MS Tiberius A.iii, fol. 2v), second quarter of the eleventh century, King Edgar, seated between St Dunstan and St Æthelwold, is again depicted with a rich beard in sharp contrast to the clean-shaven ecclesiastics (fig. 37).

In the Bayeux Tapestry (Normandy, Bayeux, Musée de la Tapisserie de Bayeux) King Edward the Confessor appears venerable with a long beard, but Harold and his younger fighting men have their chins clean-shaven (figs. 55-58). King Edward's long white beard stands out not only as a sign of old age but also of wisdom and dignity (figs. 57, 59). This is further confirmed by the opening of the king's tomb in 1163, where his beard had miraculously remained 'long and white'.³²⁷

The Anglo-Saxons wore moustaches and forked beards, except for aged men, and as William of Malmesbury, giving the account of the Battle of Hastings in 1066, notes 'The English leave the upper lip unshaven, suffering the hair continually to increase'. For Harold's spies, the Conqueror's knights, who had 'the whole face with both lips shaven' Malmesbury comments that they were strange and priest-like.³²⁸ The beard went out of fashion before the Norman Conquest,

³²⁶ See Michelle P. Brown, 'Bearded Sages and Beautiful Boys: Insular and Anglo-Saxon Attitudes to the Iconography of the Beard', in Elisabeth Mullins and Diarmuid Scully, eds *Listen, O Isles, Unto Me: Studies in Medieval Word and Image in Honour of O' Reilly* (Cork, 2011), pp. 278-290, at p. 289.

³²⁷ Constable Giles, 'Introduction' (on beards in the Middle Ages), to Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologia de Barbis*, ed., R. B. C. Huygens in *Apologia duae* (*Corpus Christianorum, continuatio medievalis*, lxii) (Turnhout, 1985), p. 68.

³²⁸ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings*, ed. and trans., R. A. B. Mynors, 2 vols (Oxford, 1998-9), 21.

thus from the middle of the eleventh and throughout the twelfth century the custom of cutting and shaving beards prevailed.³²⁹

In contrast to the manuscript iconography, on coinage the Anglo-Saxon kings appear clean-shaven like the Romans from the Republic period or after the mid-third century A.D. The only exception to this is King Edward the Confessor, who appears bearded on his seal (fig. 196) and later coinage, probably following Ottonian and byzantine practices on coinage (figs. 197-202).³³⁰

Long hair and beard have been interpreted as indicative of honesty, virility, and power and were associated with noble, strong, and powerful men both in the Church and in secular society.³³¹ The beard was also a sign of age and rank and regarded as a mark of physical and moral strength. St Augustine in his

³²⁹ Constable Giles, 'Introduction' (on beards in the Middle Ages), to Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologia de Barbis*, ed., R. B. C. Huygens in *Apologia duae (Corpus Christianorum, continuatio medievalis, lxii)* (Tunhout, 1985), p. 99.

³³⁰ King Edward the Confessor is depicted bearded on the *Hammer Cross Type* (c.1059-1062) with the bust facing to the right (fig. 197), the *PACX type* (c. 1042-1044) with bust facing to the left (fig. 198), the *Helmet type* (c. 1053-1056) with bust facing to the right (fig. 199), the *Sovereign type* (c. 1056-59) (fig. 200). In 1062 the king introduced for the first time a very unusual design in Anglo-Saxon coinage: a facing, bearded and crowned bust on the obverse (fig. 201). Finally, in 1065, when the 21.5 grain standard was restored, the bust on the coinage of King Edward also turned to the right (fig. 202); see G. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 68; J. P. C. Kent, 'From Roman Britain to Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley (London, 1961) p. 12; pl. I, 20-3 and pl. II, 1-5; The *Facing Bust* had never been used by the Anglo-Saxons kings before King Edward. However, during the eighth and ninth century the archbishops of York and Canterbury were depicted with *Facing Bust* on their coins (figs. 175-178). See also the solidus of Archbishop Wigmund (York, c.837; fig. 177); For the possible Ottonian origin of the facing bust design, see Philip D. Whitting, 'The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies Presented to Sir Frank Stenton*, ed. Michael R. H. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 35; M. Dolley, *Anglo-Saxon Pennies* (London, 1964), p. 29. The coinage of the Ottonian rulers, Henry II, Conrad II and Henry III probably was the main influence for the 'Facing Bust' issue. See C. Karkov, 'Edward, the Godwines and the end of Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 158; Finally, in 1065, when the 21.5 grain standard was restored, the bust on the coinage of King Edward also turned to the right; His ninth type bears for the first time a facing bust see G. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 68; J. P. C. Kent, 'From Roman Britain to Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley (London, 1961) p. 12; pl. I, 20-3 and pl. II, 1-5.

³³¹ Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologiade Barbis*, p. 85.

Enarrationes in Psalmos (Expositions on the Psalms) wrote that 'The beard signifies young, vigorous, active, quick men. When therefore we describe such men, we say that a man is bearded.'³³² And Bede in his Commentary on Esdras said that, 'The beard, which is a mark of the male sex and of age, is customarily put as an indication of virtue.'³³³

In the Old Testament there is reluctance about the shaving of the beard, so favoured by biblical leaders and prophets.³³⁴ For the Jews, as for most Oriental peoples, the beard was a symbol of virility; to cut off another man's beard was an outrage.³³⁵ To shave or to pluck one's own beard was a sign of mourning.³³⁶ To allow the beard to be defiled was regarded as a sign of madness.³³⁷

For some writers, King David's beard in the Old Testament represented the divinity of Christ, but it has also been interpreted as an example of humility and associated with the beard of Aaron and Christ.³³⁸ By contrast, insular images of King David, the Old Testament 'type' of Christ, usually depict him as young and beardless, as in the Durham Cassiodorus, the Vespasian Psalter miniature and historiated initials (figs. 47, 51).³³⁹

³³² *Ibid.*, p. 60; See J. Tweed, T. Scratton, H. M. Wilkins, et al. trans., St Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, 6 vols., Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church (Oxford, 1847-57).

³³³ Constable Giles, 'Introduction' (on beards in the Middle Ages), to Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologia de Barbis*, ed., R. B. C. Huygens in *Apologia duae* (*Corpus Christianorum, continuatio medievalis*, lxii) (Tunhout, 1985), p. 60.

³³⁴ Leviticus 19:27 'You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads nor harm the edges of your beard'.

³³⁵ 2 Samuel 10:4

³³⁶ Jeremiah 41:5; 48:37

³³⁷ 1 Samuel 21:13

³³⁸ Constable Giles, 'Introduction' (on beards in the Middle Ages), to Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologia de Barbis*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens in *Apologia duae* (*Corpus Christianorum, continuatio medievalis*, lxii) (Tunhout, 1985), p. 80.

³³⁹ Michelle P. Brown, 'Bearded Sages and Beautiful Boys: Insular and Anglo-Saxon Attitudes to the Iconography of the Beard', in *Listen, O Isles, Unto Me: Studies in Medieval Word and*

In Roman times it was the emperor Hadrian who first changed the Roman tradition of being clean-shaven, by introducing long hair and a beard. In the Antonine period, the dominance of hair in the imperial portrait continues to the point that the period was called the 'age of the hairy emperors'.³⁴⁰ In the end, it was the emperor Marcus Aurelius who established the public image of the philosopher emperor with long hair and beard and a great love for reading and writing.³⁴¹

King Æthelstan's contemplative depiction, humbly holding his open book next to St Cuthbert is reminiscent of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher type of monarch with a beard and love for literacy. However, it can also be interpreted as an example of royal modesty and humility following the biblical example of the bearded King David.

The Carolingian kings were depicted bearded but this changed during the Ottonian period when some of the Ottonian rulers are depicted without a beard, such as Otto III, who is depicted clean-shaven and seated in Majesty in the Aachen Gospels (Aachen, Cathedral Treasury, Aachen Gospels, fol. 16r), written in Aachen

Image in Honour of O Reilly, eds., Elisabeth Mullins and Diarmuid Scully (Cork, 2011), p. 288-289.

³⁴⁰ Donald Strong *Roman Art*, (Harmondsworth, 1980), p. 200.

³⁴¹ The Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 121-180) expresses his love for reading and writing in a letter to his tutor in rhetoric, Fronto (c. A.D. 95-166), one of the greatest Roman orators: 'I studied from three o'clock at night to eight o'clock in the morning.... And in the afternoon went home, and I betook myself to my books ... After I had read those speeches, I wrote some poor stuff that deserves to be burnt up or thrown in the water'. See Henry Dwight Sedgwick, 'Marcus to Fronto' in *Life of Marcus Aurelius*, (Massachusetts, 1920), pp. 81- 82; Some of Marcus Aurelius portraits and of his successors are very similar to traditional heads of Greek philosophers. The fashion for long hair and beard covered most of the Severans, especially Septimius Severus who appears in his portraits with curly hair and long beard. See Donald Strong, *Roman Art*, pp. 171-231; Hadrian (A.D. 117-38); The Antonines (A.D. 138-92); The Severans (A.D. 193-235).

c.996 (fig. 107). However, his beardless face probably suggests his young age, since the emperor died just when he was twenty-one years old.

By contrast, Emperor Henry II preferred a bearded representation as can be seen in a miniature depicting his crowning by Christ in the *Sacramentary of Henry II*, written in Regensburg, c.1002-14 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4456, fol. 11; fig. 112) and in another miniature from a pontifical (Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, MS Lit. 53, fol. 2v; fig. 120), written in the monastery at Seeon, c. 1014-24, where the emperor appears supported by two bishops (fig. 120).

The same preference for a beard is shared by another Ottonian ruler, Henry III. In *Goslar Gospels* (Uppsala, University Library Cod. 93, fol. 3v) written in Echternach, c.1047-56, Christ is crowning Queen Agnes and a bearded Henry III (fig. 136). Henry III appears again with a beard in a miniature from a gospel book (Speyer Cathedral, Library, Codex Aureus, Cod. Vit. 17, fol. 3r), written in Echternach c.1043-46, in which he, together with Queen Agnes, is presenting a gospel book to the Virgin Mary (fig. 144).³⁴²

The Ottonian ruler's change to a bearded representation suggests influence from the Byzantine iconography relating to the image of a ruler.³⁴³ This is also suggested by depictions of some Ottonian ecclesiastics who, by contrast to the Anglo-Saxon practice in the clergy, are depicted with a cropped beard such as Archbishop Egbert of Trier and scribe Ruodprecht in the *Egbert Psalter* (Cividale

³⁴² Likewise Otto II appears bearded together with Theophanu in an ivory (Paris, Musée national du Moyen Âge, Thermes et hôtel de Cluny), dated c.982-983, where the imperial couple is being crowned by Christ (fig. 137). Conrad II is also depicted bearded in the *Codex Aureus* (Speyer Cathedral, Library, Cod. Vit. 17, fol. 2v) where he appears venerating Christ with Queen Gisela (fig. 144).

³⁴³ Another Ottonian authority figure with a beard is Count Dietrich of Holland, who is depicted bearded together with his wife Hildegard in a gospel book (The Hague, Royal Library, MS 761/1, fol. 214v), written in Lotharingia, c. 940-70 (fig. 142).

del Friuli, Museo Archaeologico, MS C. xxxvi, ff.16v-17), written in Reichenau, c. 977-93 (fig. 74).³⁴⁴

Concerning the priests, Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine seem to condemn the practice of wearing long beards, but no very definite conclusion can be drawn from their allusions. The legislation for clerics follows Canon 44 of the Fourth of Carthage, which notes that a cleric is to allow neither hair nor beard to grow freely—*Clericus nec comam nutriat nec barbam*—though this prohibition is very probably directed only against beards of excessive length.³⁴⁵

During the Middle Ages in England it was regarded as uncanonical for priests to allow their beard to grow. In the *Laws of Wihtred* of A.D. 96, a cleric was known as a *bescoren man* and one of King Alfred's laws states that, 'If a man shave off another's beard let him make amends with twenty shillings. If he bind him first and then shave him like a priest, *hine to preoste bescire*, let him make amends with sixty shillings'.³⁴⁶ The tonsure of clerics and monks was commonly compared to the crown of thorns.³⁴⁷ Accordingly, the cutting of St Peger's hair and the shaving of his beard when he was captured by the Gentiles symbolized for Sicard the

³⁴⁴ Archbishop Egbert of Trier is also depicted with a cropped beard before St Peter in the Egbert Psalter (MS C. xxxvi, ff.18v-19) and again in the frontispiece of the Codex Egberti (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 24, fol. 2) written in c.977-93 (figs. 73, 74). Another Ottonian ecclesiastic with a cropped beard is Bishop Sigebert of Minden shown on an ivory book cover (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS Germ. Qu. 42) dated c.1022-36, where he appears as if transfigured (fig. 121). By contrast to the clean-shaven Otto II in the Aachen Gospels, fol. 16 (Aachen, Cathedral Treasury, Aachen Gospels), the scribe Liuthar, who is presenting the gospel book to the emperor on folio 15v, has a cropped beard (fig. 107).

³⁴⁵ The Canon 44 of the so-called Fourth of Carthage represents the synodal decrees of a council held in Southern Gaul in the times of St Caesarius of Arles, c.503. This canon, included in the *Corpus juris*, was widely quoted and had great influence giving rise to several other works including the *Penitential* of Halitgar and the so-called *Excerptions* attributed to Egbert of York.

³⁴⁶ A *bescoren man*, that is, a shorn man. This might refer to the *tonsure*.

³⁴⁷ Constable Giles, 'Introduction' (on beards in the Middle Ages), to Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologia de Barbis*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens in *Apologia duae* (*Corpus Christianorum, continuatio medialis*, lxii) (Turnhout, 1985), p. 74.

passion of Christ and the morality of mankind.³⁴⁸ Bede associates the tonsure with Christ's Passion in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*:

It is right for those who have taken monastic vows or holy orders to bind themselves for the sake of the Lord with stricter bonds of continence, to wear upon their heads by way of tonsure the likeness of the crown of thorns, which He in His passion bore on His head in order to bear, or rather to bear off and carry right away, the thorns or briars of our sins.³⁴⁹

Under King Edgar the canon for clerics is clear 'Let no man in holy orders conceal his tonsure, nor let himself be misshaven nor keep his beard for any time, if he will have God's blessing and St. Peter's and ours'. This suggests that the Anglo-Saxon practice wanted to differentiate the priests from the rest of the population: long garments, clean-shaven face and tonsured head for the priests, and short tunic, beard and long hair for the *laici*. Accordingly, shaving was an act of submission and obedience, a sign of detachment from worldly pleasures.³⁵⁰

However, the beard continued to be considered as a sign of strength, wisdom and virtue and thus hairiness was associated with holiness. Holy men, hermits, recluses, prophets regularly had long beards both as sign of independence and chastity and as mark of their sufferings. Moreover, a long

³⁴⁸ Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologia de Barbis*, p. 72.

³⁴⁹ HE V, 21. See Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, ed. and trans., *Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 546-7; Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologia de Barbis*, p. 74.

³⁵⁰ Constable Giles, 'Introduction' (on beards in the Middle Ages), to Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologia de Barbis*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens in *Apologia duae* (*Corpus Christianorum, continuatio medialis*, lxii) (Turnhout, 1985), pp. 47-130; esp. p. 60.

unruly beard was also commonly regarded as a sign of mourning.³⁵¹ The relationship between beards and holiness probably accounts for representations of some saints and scribes in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts with a beard or with a half grown beard, suggesting that they have attained a higher level of abstinence and humility.

St Benedict was commonly represented in the early Middle Ages either beardless or with only a short beard. He appears with a beard in the Arundel Psalter (BL, Arundel MS 155, fol. 133), written in Canterbury, c.1012-23. A monk prostrating before him, identified as the scribe Eddui Bassan, is also portrayed with a half grown beard (fig. 33).³⁵² The same type of half-grown beard as that of Eddui Bassan is worn by Rabanus Maurus in the frontispiece of the *Rabanus De Laude Crucis*, a tenth-century Carolingian manuscript (Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.16.3, fol. 1v), showing him presenting his work to Pope Gregory and again kneeling before the cross (fol. 30v).³⁵³ A kneeling monk with a similar semi-grown beard is depicted (BL, MS Tiberius A. iii, fol. 2v) girdled with the scroll of *Regularis Concordia* before King Edgar, St Dunstan and St Æthelwold (fig. 37).

Michelle Brown, examining the symbolic and theological aspect of a bearded image, suggests that depictions of ecclesiastics with half grown beards express a state of submission and humility, and 'would indicate the adherence to a

³⁵¹ Burchard of Bellevaux, *Apologia de Barbi*, p. 66.

³⁵² The scribe Eddui Bassan worked on *de luxe* gospel books and most likely left the scriptorium of Christ Church Canterbury, to enter Cnut's court where he worked on important texts c.1010-25. Michelle Brown notes that only St Benedictine and Eddui Bassan are depicted in colour in the miniature, whereas the rest of the monks are in black and white. See Michelle P. Brown, 'Bearded Sages and Beautiful Boys: Insular and Anglo-Saxon Attitudes to the Iconography of the Beard', in Elisabeth Mullins and Diarmuid Scully, eds, *Listen, O Isles, Unto Me: Studies in Medieval Word and Image in Honour of O'Reilly* (Cork, 2011), p. 290.

³⁵³ The James Catalogue of Western Manuscripts: <http://sites.trin.cam.ac.uk/james/viewpage.php?Index=272>.

recognised convention for portraying the penitent, humble religious.³⁵⁴ This agrees with the exaltation of the virtue of humility in the *Rule* of St Benedict:

The third step of humility is that a man submits to his superior in all obedience for the love of God, imitating the Lord of whom the Apostle says: *He became obedient even to death* (Phil 2:8). The fourth step of humility is that in this obedience under difficult, unfavourable, or even unjust conditions, his heart quietly embraces suffering and endures it without seeking escape. For Scripture has it: 'Anyone who perseveres to the end will be saved (Matt 10:22), and again, Be brave of heart and rely on the Lord (Ps 26[27]:14)'.³⁵⁵

1.6 'Be Mindful of me in your Mellifluous Orations' ³⁵⁶

1.6.1 On Intercession and Salvation

In the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, Bede dedicates the Prose Life of St Cuthbert (ff. 2-56) to Eadfrith: 'Preface of the priest Bede's Life of St Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne, for Bishop Eadfrid'. The text starts as follows: 'To the holy and most blessed father, Bishop Eadfrith, and also to the whole congregation of brethren who serve Christ on the island of Lindisfarne, Bede, your faithful fellow-servant,

³⁵⁴ Michelle P. Brown, 'Bearded Sages and Beautiful Boys: Insular and Anglo-Saxon Attitudes to the Iconography of the Beard', in Elisabeth Mullins and Diarmuid Scully, eds. *Listen, O' Isles, Unto Me: Studies in Medieval Word and Image in Honour of O'Reilly* (Cork, 2011), p. 290.

³⁵⁵ Timothy Fry, ed. 'Humility', *The Rule of St Benedict in English* (Collegeville, 1982), p. 35.

³⁵⁶ From the inscription *Rex Pius Æðelstan* in a late ninth- or early tenth-century Ottonian gospel book (BL, MS Cotton Tiberius A. ii, fol. 15v) donated to Christ Church, Canterbury. See Simon Keynes, 'Æthelstan's Books', in Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss, eds. *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England* (1985), pp. 150-151; Michael Lapidge, 'Some Poems as Evidence for the Reign of Æthelstan', *ASE* 9 (1981), pp. 61-98; Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 54-55.

sends greetings.³⁵⁷ Bede's Metrical Life of St Cuthbert is followed by a word list interpreted partly in Anglo-Saxon (ff. 70-92v). The last chapter XIX ends with: *misericordia et miseratione coronat. Amen.*³⁵⁸ The liturgical section (ff. 92v-95v) features the hymn, Mass and Office of St Cuthbert.³⁵⁹ The Hymn to St Cuthbert, *Magnus miles mirabilis*, reiterates St Cuthbert's words when he presented himself to King Alfred as a soldier of Christ, *miles Christi*.³⁶⁰ The office and the special mass for St Cuthbert may have been composed for the court chapel of King Æthelstan or his father.

The two lives are separated by the two chapters from the *Historia Ecclesiastica* with St Cuthbert's posthumous miracles (ff. 56-58).³⁶¹ The posthumous

³⁵⁷ *Prefatio Bede presbiteri de vita sancti Cudberhti Lindisfarnensis episcopi ad Eadfridum episcopum and Domino Sancto ac beatissimo patri Eadfrido episcopi sed et omni congregationi fratrum qui in Lindisfarnensi insula Christo deseruiunt, Beda fidelis uester conseruus salutem*; see *Two Lives of St Cuthbert: a Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's Prose Life*, ed. and trans., B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 142-3. Eadfrith was Bishop of the Church of Lindisfarne, associated with the Lindisfarne Gospels (BL, Cotton MS Nero D. iv, fol. 25v). In 970, at Chester-le-Street, Aldred wrote the colophon and interlineal gloss to the Lindisfarne Gospels with a reference to Eadfrith: 'Eadfrith, Bishop of the Church of Lindisfarne, originally wrote this book for God and for St Cuthbert and for all the saints whose relics are on the Island. And [Aldred] glossed in English. Matthew's portion for God and St Cuthbert'. See C. Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 60-1. See also Lawrence Nees, 'Reading Aldred's Colophon for the Lindisfarne Gospels', *Speculum* 78 (2003), pp. 333-77; Michelle P. Brown, *The Lindisfarne Gospels: Society, Spirituality and the Scribe* (London, 2003). The verse 'Life' is dedicated to a priest named John and its preface begins *Domino in Domino in dominorum dilectissimo Iohanni presbitero Beda famulus Christi salute*; See also Werner Jaager, ed., *Beda's Metrische Vita Sancti Cuthberti* (Leipzig, 1935); M. Lapidge, 'Bede's Metrical Vita S. Cuthberti', in G. Bonner, D. Rollason and C. Stancliffe, eds., *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to AD 1200* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 77-93.

³⁵⁸ M. R. James, M. Parker, and A. Rogers, eds. 1912. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College* (Cambridge, 1912), pp. 426-41.

³⁵⁹ Hohler suggests that these texts might have been composed for the court chapel of either Æthelstan or his father; see Christopher Hohler, 'The Durham Services in Honour of St Cuthbert', in *Relics of Saint Cuthbert*, ed. C. F. Battiscombe (Oxford, 1956), pp. 156-7.

³⁶⁰ 'Great and noble soldier' See *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of Saint Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony*, ed. Ted Johnson South (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 54-5.

³⁶¹ The only part of the manuscript with no direct reference to St Cuthbert is the one that contains a series of lists of popes, disciples, bishops, kings and royal genealogies. See M. R. James, M. Parker, and A. Rogers, eds. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library*

miracles stress the power of prayer and faith when a suppliant asks for St Cuthbert's intercession with God. The account by the monk Baduthegn describes how he was cured of paralysis. This happened after he had 'prostrated himself before the body of the man of God, praying with devout fervour that the Lord, through Cuthbert's intercession would be propitious to him'.³⁶² The devout monk Baduthegn kneeling is reminiscent of Byrhtferth's description of St Oswald kneeling in prayer.³⁶³ In the second account, the diseased eye of a monk of Dacre was cured by the relics of St Cuthbert, in which he had great faith.³⁶⁴

In the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* the recurrent references to St Cuthbert's miracles and to his close relationship with kings are closely related to the iconography of the prefatory miniature. King Æthelstan's humble and respectful attitude towards the saint suggests a pious and devout Christian ruler. In return, St Cuthbert points to the king and turns his eyes upwards as if interceding for the king with God and thus rewarding Æthelstan for his faith.

King Æthelstan's visit and his gifts and donations to the shrine of St Cuthbert suggest that the king acted as a devout suppliant who sought God's blessing for his political and military campaign in Scotland in 934, through the

of *Corpus Christi College Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1909-12), vol. I, pp. 426-41. The folios 67v-69v include an untitled section on the ages of the world and of man, the number of bones, veins and teeth in the human body, the dimensions of the earth, temple, tabernacle, St Peter's and Noah's ark; the number of books in the Old and New Testaments; the number of verses in the psalter; units for measuring distance; and the seven days of Creation. See James 1912, vol. I, pp. 1-250.

³⁶² Ted J. South, ed., *HSC*, ch. 4.

³⁶³ See M. Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth, *The Life of St Oswald*, p. 55, iii. 2.

³⁶⁴ Ted Johnson South, ed., *HSC*, ch. 4, xxxii. The *Corpus Sancto Vitae Cuthberti* is the earliest surviving manuscript to contain the two chapters from the *Historia Ecclesiastica*. The miracles of the two chapters are not included in Bede's Prose Life, but continued to be included in the *Life of St Cuthbert* in later manuscripts. See Catherine Karkov 2004, no. 64; B. Colgrave, ed., *Two Lives of St Cuthbert* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 20-39.

intercession of St Cuthbert.³⁶⁵ Accordingly, it seems highly likely that the miniature epitomises the special relationship between the saint and Anglo-Saxon kings and shows St Cuthbert's power of intercession with God on their behalf, as the literature records on the occasion of King Alfred's victory at the battle of Edington in 878.

The iconography of the miniature in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* is also closely related to that of King Edgar in the New Minster Charter and King Cnut in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, for whom the Virgin Mary and St Peter, the patrons of the minster, intercede with Christ in Majesty. Evoking the central role of intercession in Christian doctrine, the miniatures suggest that salvation can be pursued through the supplicant's strong faith and prayer. Accordingly, the Anglo-Saxon king, presented in the iconography as an ideal Christian ruler and God's elect, becomes the first in line for salvation.

Books: Gifts and Donations

The strong presence of books in the prefatory miniatures suggests their key role in liturgical commemoration, intercession and salvation. In this period, lavishly illuminated manuscripts travelled all over Europe as gifts, either exchanged between the secular and ecclesiastical elite or given to various religious houses by them. Such gifts expressed piety, generosity, active devotion and aspiration for a spiritual relationship with the monastic community.³⁶⁶ This steady traffic in manuscripts between England and the Continent evidently contributed

³⁶⁵ Ted Johnson South, ed., *HSC*, ch. 26.

³⁶⁶ M. F. Smith, R. Fleming and P. Halpin, 'Court and Piety in Late Anglo-Saxon England', *The Catholic Historical Review* 87: 4 (2001), pp. 569-602.

to the exchange of artistic ideas and offered an important source of inspiration to both sides of the Channel.

As Oleg Grabar has pointed out, there is a hierarchy of objects which divides gifts into two categories: the one includes gifts given for pleasure or to court favour and the other gifts laden with spiritual or religious meaning, such as liturgical books, gospels, icons and crosses which carry the promise of eternal life and salvation.³⁶⁷ As much as the cross, the book carries a deep spiritual meaning for Christianity. For this reason, the exchange of liturgical books as gifts holds particular significance: deliverance of knowledge, wisdom and the spread of divine law.

King Æthelstan and King Cnut often gave manuscripts as gifts to various places in Europe.³⁶⁸ King Æthelstan is known to have possessed several Carolingian manuscripts probably given to him by foreign rulers. The tenth-century Æthelstan Psalter (BL, Cotton MS Galba A. xviii) may also have belonged to the king.³⁶⁹

In 'The Royal Manuscript as Idea and Object', Lowden discusses the luxurious books donated to monastic foundations as a means for the kings to obtain divine sanction. The practice of liturgical commemoration in monastic foundations, as indicated in manuscripts and other evidence of the period, shows that the Anglo-Saxons ruling elite were deeply concerned about salvation.

³⁶⁷ Oleg Grabar, 'The Shared Culture of Objects', in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, 1997), pp. 115-29. See S. Keynes, 'Æthelstan's Books', in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, eds. M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 143-201.

³⁶⁸ Robert Deshman, 'Anglo-Saxon Art after Alfred', *Art Bulletin* 56 (1974), pp. 176-200.

³⁶⁹ A sixteenth-century note (fol. 1r) relates the manuscript with King Æthelstan see S. Keynes, 'King Athelstan's Books' in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, eds. Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 193-196.

King Æthelstan frequently donated manuscripts to various English churches. King Æthelstan is mentioned as a great benefactor in the *Liber Vitae* of Durham (BL, Cotton MS Dominian A. vii) on the verso of the first leaf. And the repetition of his name 'aðelstan rex' on the recto, following the heading *Nomina regum uel ducum*, increases his importance as a patron as it commemorates his name twice.³⁷⁰

Several of the books that the king gave to religious foundations had inscriptions which commemorated the donation and asked for prayers for the king.³⁷¹ Inscriptions added to books that King Æthelstan gave to Christ Church Canterbury, St Augustine Canterbury, and Bath Abbey stress that the donation was made for the salvation of the king's soul, and they remind the monastic community, or advise the reader, to pray for him.

An inscription in a late ninth- or early tenth-century, Carolingian gospel book with Evangelist portraits, known as the Coronation Gospels (BL, Cotton MS Tiberius A. ii, fol. 15v) given to Christ Church in Canterbury by King Æthelstan commemorates the donation and urges the archbishop and the community not only to protect the book but also to offer prayers for the king. Furthermore, King

³⁷⁰ It is commonly assumed that the *Liber Vitae* of Durham was in Chester-le-Street. See Gerald Bonner, 'St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street', in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and Community to AD 1200*, eds. Gerald Bonner, David Rollason and Clare Stancliff (Boydell Press, 1989), p. 387.

³⁷¹ In the books presented to Christ Church Canterbury, St Augustine's, Canterbury, and Bath Abbey, the inscriptions point out that the donation was given for the salvation of the king's soul and urge the reader to pray for the king. For King Æthelstan's relics, see William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum: Deeds of the Kings of the English.*, 2 vols., ed. R.A.B. Mynors, R. M. Thomas and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1998), p. 135; Laura H. Loomis, 'The Holy Relics of Charlemagne and King Æthelstan: The Lances of Longinus and St Maurutius', *Speculum* 25 (1950), pp. 437-56; Michael Wood, 'The Making of King Æthelstan's Empire: An English Charlemagne', in *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society: Studies Presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*, ed. P. Wormald with D. Bollough and R. Collins (Oxford, 1983), pp. 250-72; Patrick Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter: A Tenth-Century Cultural History* (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 177-209.

Æthelstan hopes that the book might 'in perpetuity provide an example of glory for those looking at it.'³⁷²

Æthelstan, king of the English and ruler of the whole of Britain, with a devout mind gave this gospel-book to the primatial see of Canterbury, to the church dedicated to Christ. And may the archbishop and the community of this church, present and future, for ever regard the donation with diligent feelings, and in particular may they take pains to safeguard it, in as much as they are to render account to God, lest anyone hereafter, misled by dark deception, should try to steal the book from this place. But may it remain here in safe custody, and may it in perpetuity provide an example of glory for those looking at it. For I beseech you in prayer that you will not cease to be mindful of me in your mellifluous orations, as I trust will take place with harmonious voice.

The Latin inscription shows that the king had adopted the word 'Basileus' for his title, used originally by the Byzantine emperors: *Volumen hoc euuangelii. ÆDELSTAN. Anglorum basyleos. Et curagulus totius Bryttannie. Deuota mente.*³⁷³

Æthelstan's piety and plea for salvation is equally expressed in a poem added to the gospel-book on folio 15r: 'Holy King Æthelstan, renowned through the wide world, whose esteem flourishes and whose honour endures everywhere,

³⁷² See Simon Keynes, 'King Æthelstan's Books', in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, eds. M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 149-50.

³⁷³ Keynes 'Æthelstan's Books', pp. 149-50; C. Karkov 2004, p. 55. On the title 'Basileus', see Patrick Wormald, *Making of English Law*, 1999, p. 445; see also Henry R. Loyn, 'The Imperial Style of the Tenth-Century Anglo-Saxon Kings', *History* 40 (1956), pp. 111-15.

whom God set as king over the English, sustained by the foundation of the throne, and as leader of [His] earthly forces.'³⁷⁴ The continental manuscript was given to the Anglo-Saxon king as a gift on the occasion of the marriage of Emperor Otto I to his sister, Eadgyth. According to the inscription, the manuscript was presented to King Æthelstan by his brother-in-law, Emperor Otto I, and his mother Mechtild, perhaps in 929.³⁷⁵

The MacDurnan Gospels, made in Armagh in the late ninth century (London, Lambeth Palace MS 1370) feature an inscription written (fol. 3v) in display capitals: 'Mael Brigte mac Tornain propounds this gospel-book throughout the world, in a manner worthy of God; but Æthelstan king and ruler of the Anglo-Saxons, gives it for ever to the metropolitan see of Canterbury'.³⁷⁶

Another inscription associated with King Æthelstan comes from a gospel-book (BL, Royal i. A. xviii, fol. 3v) written on the continent in the late ninth or early tenth century and donated to St Augustine, Canterbury. 'With a devout mind King Athelstan gave this book to the Church of Canterbury dedicated to St

³⁷⁴ The poem may have been composed after the *Battle of Brunanburh* in 937. See M. Lapidge, 'Some Latin Poems as Evidence for the Reign of Æthelstan', in *Anglo-Latin Literature 900-1066* (London, 1993), pp. 49-86.

³⁷⁵ An inscription on folio 24r with the names of Otto I, king and later emperor of Germany, and his mother Matilda: +ODDA REX +MIHTILD MATER REGIS, links the gospel-book with the Saxon court of Germany. Two other inscriptions on fol. 15v and 15r show that the manuscript was given to Christ Church, Canterbury by King Æthelstan see S. Keynes, 'King Athelstan's Books', pp. 147-53. The book was afterwards given by Æthelstan to Christ Church, Canterbury; see Margaret Rickert, *Painting in Britain: The Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1965), pp. 30-2.

³⁷⁶ In the first part of the inscription features the name 'Mæielbriðus mac Durnani', that is, Mael Brigte Tornain. He was a well-known Irish ecclesiastic in the late ninth and early tenth centuries, abbot of Iona and all the Columban churches, and abbot of Raphoe. The inscription suggests that Mael Brigte had once been the owner of the manuscript. See Simon Keynes, 'King Æthelstan's Books', in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, eds., M. Lapidge and H. Gneuss (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 153-4 and n. 52.

Augustine; and may whoever reads this make prayers to the Almighty for him and for his (friends).'³⁷⁷

A late ninth-century copy of the Acts of Constantinople (680) written on the Continent (BL, MS Cotton Claudius B.v) also belonged to King Æthelstan and was given by the king to Bath Abbey at an uncertain date. The book has an inscription, on the bottom of folio 5r:

King Æthelstan gave this book to God and to the holy mother of Christ and to saints Peter and Benedict in the monastery of the city of Bath, for the salvation of his soul. And may whoever reads these letters make prayers to the Almighty for him and his friends.³⁷⁸

In the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberti* the book list of King Æthelstan's gifts to Chester-le-Street may have included the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 183) and the lost gospel book (BL, Cotton MS Otho B.ix.), written probably in Brittany in late ninth or early tenth century, and later owned by King Æthelstan.³⁷⁹ The document with King Æthelstan's gift-list to Chester-le-

³⁷⁷ *Hunc codicem ÆDELSTAN rex deuota mente Dorobernensi tribuit ecclesie beato Augustino dicat et quisquis hoc legerit omnipotenti pro eo proque suis fundat preces.* See S. Keynes, 'King Æthelstan's Books', pp. 147-53.

³⁷⁸ '+Hunc codicem Æthelt's'anus traditit Deo et alme Christi genetrici sanctisque Petro et Benedicto in Bathonie ciuitatis coenobio ob remunerationem suæ animæ. Et quisquis hos legerit caracteres, omnipotenti pro eo proque suis amicis fundat preces'. It is not certain whether the inscription shares the same date with the donation. See S. Keynes, 'Æthelstan's Books', p. 160; C. Karkov, *Text and Picture in Anglo-Saxon England: Narrative Strategies in the Junius 11 Manuscript* (Cambridge and New York, 2001), p. 54.

³⁷⁹ Francis Wormald supports the view that King Æthelstan visited the shrine of St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street in 937 and presented the shrine with a copy of Bede's *Vitae Cuthberti*. See Francis Wormald, 'Anniversary Address', *The Antiquaries Journal* 44:2 (London, 1967), p. 163.

Street, states that the donation was witnessed by God and St Cuthbert and warns against those who may dare to steal the gifts.³⁸⁰

The inscriptions in the books show that King Æthelstan's donations to monastic foundations were closely related to his pursuit for eternal life. Through royal patronage the king sought to be God's elect and to encourage the ecclesiastical community to pray for him. However, the king's request for prayers was not only limited to these instances. The crucial role of prayer in the attainment of salvation is also suggested in clauses of his law codes and various charters. A clause of King Æthelstan's laws issued at Exeter (V Æthelstan) reads: 'And every Friday at every Minster all the servants of God are to sing fifty psalms for the king and for all who desire what he desires, and for the others, as they may deserve'.³⁸¹

Charters issued in the winter of 932-33 record grants in exchange for the singing of psalms for King Æthelstan or for helping the poor. The nuns of Shaftesbury were required to sing fifty psalms and say mass for the king daily until the Last Judgment in exchange for a grant of land at Fontmell, Dorset (S 419). The monks of Sherborne were asked to sing the whole of the psalter and say a mass for the king annually in return for a grant of land at Bradford Abbas, Dorset (S 422). A layman named Alfred was granted land at North Stoneham (Hants) on the condition that he and his heirs feed one hundred and twenty of the poor every day with bread and porridge (*pulmento*) until the Last Judgement (S 418). Other charters request prayers from laymen and religious houses.

³⁸⁰ Ted Johnson South ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto: A History of St Cuthbert and a Record of his Patrimony*, (Cambridge, 2002) ch. 26; See also Gerald Bonner, 'St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street', in *St Cuthbert, His Cult and Community to AD 1200*, eds., Gerald Bonner, David Rollason and Clare Stancliff (Boydell Press, 1989), p. 387.

³⁸¹ See 'King Æthelstan's Laws issued at Exeter: V Æthelstan', in *English Historical Documents*, ed. and trans., Dorothy Whitelock (London, 1979), p. 423.

Focusing on the image of King Æthelstan in the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, this chapter examined the iconography of Anglo-Saxon kingship in relation to the theological ideas of the period. Assessment of medieval textual sources, coinage, and relevant compositions in Anglo-Saxon, Carolingian and Ottonian manuscript illumination suggests that in the prefatory miniature King Æthelstan through the means of the open book presents himself as a humble servant of God and seeks St Cuthbert's intercession for him with God. Rewarding Æthelstan for his humility, faith, and spirituality, St Cuthbert intercedes for him with God, opening the path to salvation for the Anglo-Saxon monarch.

CHAPTER 2: The prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter

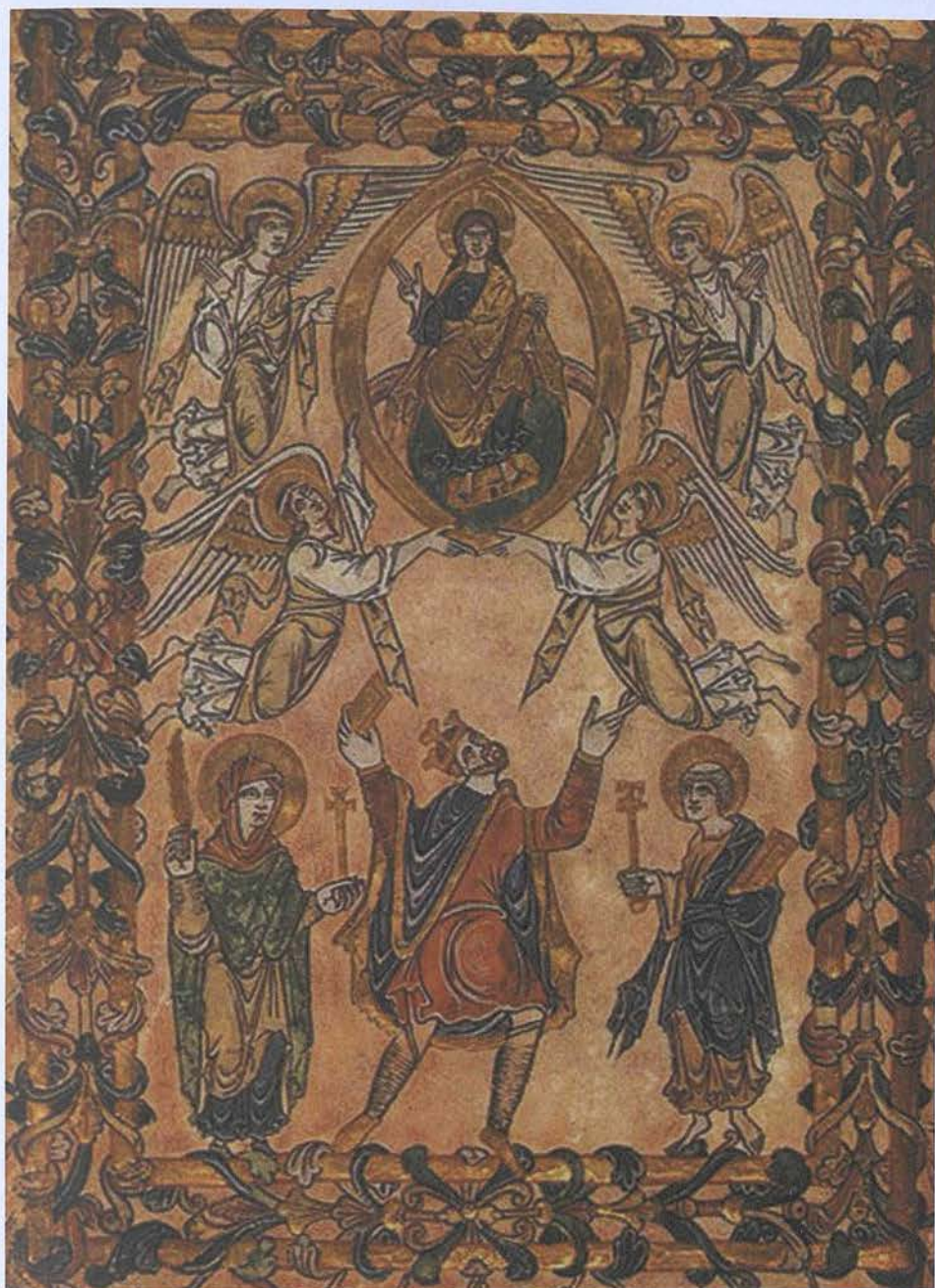


Fig 2. *King Edgar holding a book before Christ*. New Minster Charter, c.966

London, British Library, MS Cotton Vespasian A. viii, fol. 2v

In the pictorial prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter, produced in Winchester, c. 966 (BL, Cotton MS Vespasian A. viii, fol. 2v), King Edgar, crowned, bearded, and holding a closed book in his left hand, is depicted with raised arms venerating Christ who is enthroned above within a golden mandorla upheld by four angels (fig. 4).³⁸² Cross-nimbed, Christ in Majesty holds a small closed book in his left hand and his right hand is raised in blessing. Lavishly dressed, King Edgar wears a red knee-length tunic with narrow sleeves and a blue cloak with a gold border, fastened at the right shoulder with a circular brooch. King Edgar is the largest figure in the composition, placed below Christ in Majesty and flanked by the patrons of the New Minster at Winchester, the Virgin Mary and St Peter. The Virgin Mary is holding a palm in her raised right hand and a cross in her left hand while St Peter, standing opposite the Virgin, is holding a book in his left hand and a key cross in his right hand. The attire of both the Virgin Mary and King Edgar follow the contemporary Anglo-Saxon fashion, whereas the

³⁸² G. R. C. Davis, *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain: A Short Catalogue* (London, 1958), no. 1049; Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 900-1066* (London, 1976), no. 16; Janet Backhouse, *The Illuminated Page: Ten Centuries of Manuscript Painting in the British Library* (London, 1997), no. 8; Sean Miller, ed., *Charters of the New Minster, Winchester, Anglo-Saxon Charters*, 9 (Oxford, 2001), pp. xxxviii, xlii, 95–116; Alexander R. Rumble, ed. and trans., *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents relating to the topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman city and its minsters*, Winchester Studies, 4 (Oxford, 2002), pp. 10, 69–72; Neil R. Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books*, 2nd edn (London, 1964), p. 103; www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton_MS

garments of Christ, St Peter and the angels show 'classical' Byzantine origins.³⁸³ The miniature surrounded by a lush foliated frame is painted on purple vellum, with gold, blue, red green, pale brown and purple as the predominant colours.

Until now, the New Minster Charter prefatory miniature has been mainly treated as a presentation scene. According to this interpretation, the Anglo-Saxon king is depicted as a donor, offering his book to Christ in Majesty.³⁸⁴ Additionally, Catherine Karkov, Francis Wormald and Richard Gameson suggest that the image of King Edgar presenting his charter to Christ provides a model for that of King Cnut and Queen Emma in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*.³⁸⁵ This study agrees with Gerchow's view that the prefatory miniature of King Edgar in the New Minster Charter and the New Minster *Liber Vitae* are related but that they also present distinct differences: Edgar's fully painted miniature is lavish in the use of gold and purple while the outline drawing of the *Liber Vitae* looks more austere in comparison. It reflects a monastic environment, intensified by the presence of the monks in the lower register.³⁸⁶ In addition, the *Last Judgment* miniatures that follow

³⁸³ Robert Deshman, 'Benedictus monarca et monachus Monarchus: Early Medieval Ruler Theology and the Anglo-Saxon Reform', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 22 (1988), p. 224.

³⁸⁴ Key examples of scholars discussing the three prefatory miniatures as presentation scenes are the following: Eric G. Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts from the Xth to the XIIIth century* (Paris and Brussels, 1926), pp. 3, 7, 19; James 1912b, I, 426-41; E. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts* (1976), no. 6; Gretsche 1999, pp. 352-9; Gneuss 2001, no. 56; Robert Deshman, 'Anglo-Saxon Art after Alfred', *The Art Bulletin*, vol. LVI (1974), p. 195; Margaret Rickert, 'Anglo-Saxon Art from the Late Ninth to the Middle Eleventh Century', in *Painting in Britain*, pp. (A)20, (E)36; Backhouse, ed., *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art*; C. R. Dodwell, *Anglo-Saxon Painting 800-1100*, pp. 95, 98, 120; Scot McKendrick, J. Lowden, K. Doyle, eds. *Royal manuscripts: The Genius of Illumination* (London, 2011), nos. 5, 8.

³⁸⁵ Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004) p. 123; Francis Wormald, 'Late Anglo-Saxon Art: Some Questions and Suggestions', in J. J. G. Alexander, T. J. Brown, Joan Gibbs, eds., *Collected Writings I: Studies in Medieval Art from the Sixth to the Twelfth Centuries* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 105-110; Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church*, pp. 22, 130-131.

³⁸⁶ Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', in Carola Hicks, ed., *England in the Eleventh Century* (Stamford, 1992), p. 234

the prefatory miniature (fols. 6v-7r) contribute to the formation of a narrative cycle of salvation closely related to the context of a *Liber Vitae*.

The iconographical analysis aims to reconstruct the original context of the prefatory miniature and to access Anglo-Saxon kingship in relation to the theological concepts of the period. For possible iconographical models, related Carolingian, Anglo-Saxon and Ottonian manuscript illuminations are also discussed. Evaluating the iconography of the prefatory miniature and focusing on the unusual posture of King Edgar the chapter assesses the contents of the New Minster Charter together with various medieval textual sources, examining propagandistic ideas, historical and political issues.

2.1 +Ego Edgar

2.1.1 King Edgar and the New Minster Charter

Edgar, king of the Mercians and Northumbrians (957-9) and king of the English (959-75), was son of King Edmund and nephew of King Æthelstan. He ascended to the throne of Wessex on the first of October 959, after the death of his brother, King Eadwig.³⁸⁷ With his second wife, Ælfthryth, Edgar had two sons, Edmund and Æthelred the Unready.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁷ Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon Art*, (London, 1971) pp. 364-75; The ASE, A. 958, mentions the ascension of Edgar to the throne at the age of sixteen: 'This year died king Edwy on the Kalends of October; and Edgar his brother succeeded to the kingdom, as well of the West-Saxons as of the Mercians, and of the North-humbrians; and he was then sixteen years of age.' See J. A. Giles, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London, 1914).

³⁸⁸ ASC, A. 965, 'In this year king Edgar took Elfrida for his queen; she was the daughter of Ordgar the earldoman'. See J. A. Giles, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London, 1914). In later sources, there is an allegation that Queen Ælfthryth was involved in the murder of her stepson, King Edward the Martyr; see William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum* 162, ed. R.A.B. Mynors, R. M. Thomas and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 1998), p. 253; *Memorials of St Duncan, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs, RS 63 (London 1874), p. 114; for the early eleventh-century life of St Oswald, see J. C. Raine, *Historians of the Church of York and its Archbishops*, RS lxxi (London, 1879), p. 114.

Some of the titles on Edgar's coinage and charters reveal imperial aspirations similar to those of his uncle, King Æthelstan. His title on the obverse of the 'Horizontal' types is *Edgar Rex*, and on the obverse of the 'Circumscription' types, *Rex Totius Britanniae* or *Rex Anglorum*. As King of the English (959-975) Edgar styles himself in some of his charters as follows: 'Edgar, ruler of the whole of Albion' (S 680), 'Edgar, monarch of the whole island of Britain' (S 736), (S 775) 'Edgar, emperor of the whole of Albion' (S 775).³⁸⁹

King Edgar's reign was not marked by great battles but by his monastic and monetary reforms followed in time by one of the most remarkable events in his reign: his grandiose coronation at Bath in 973.³⁹⁰ In the 970s, Edgar instituted a reform of the coinage establishing a system of periodic recoinage. In legislation, the king reinforced his uncle's, King Æthelstan, legislation by repeating in his own law codes Æthelstan's statement, 'There shall run one coinage throughout the realm'.³⁹¹

John of Worcester tells us that King Edgar was called *Pacificus*, most probably suggesting that the king was engaged in domestic reforms rather than military campaigns since the kingdom under Edgar did not experience any foreign attacks.³⁹² Favouring the Benedictine Reform in England, King Edgar actively supported the major ecclesiastic reformers of the period such as Dunstan, Oswald

³⁸⁹ Simon Keynes, 'A Conspectus of the Charters of King Edgar, 957-75', in *Edgar King of the English, 959-975: New Interpretations*, ed. D. G. Scragg (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 60-80.

³⁹⁰ Edgar's coronation at Bath is described in a poem in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and in Byrhtferth's *Vita S. Oswaldi* in *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgbwine*, ed. and trans., Michael Lapidge (Oxford, 2009), iv. 6-8, pp. 105-111.

³⁹¹ Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents c.500-1042* (Methuen, 1979), pt. 1, no. 40, p. 433; F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle, 1913), vol. I, p. 204; Henry R. Loyn, 'The Theory of Kingship', in *The Governance of Anglo-Saxon England 500-1087* (London, 1984), pp. 84, 122.

³⁹² R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk, 1995, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, vol. II: *The Annals from 450 to 1066* (Oxford, 1995-8).

and Æthelwold.³⁹³ One flaw in Edgar's reign, recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, was that he accepted heathen customs and harmful foreigners into the kingdom.³⁹⁴ Furthermore, William of Malmesbury mentions as Edgar's weak points his cruelty and his lust for women.³⁹⁵ Edgar died on the eighth of July 975 and was buried at Glastonbury, like his father King Edmund. The poem that marks Edgar's death in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* glorifies the king by stressing that he was renowned across all the nations and that kings bowed before him.³⁹⁶

In 963, King Edgar, having supported the foundation and reformation of the monasteries, appointed Æthelwold to the bishopric of Winchester.³⁹⁷ The following year, 964, Bishop Æthelwold, with King Edgar's support, replaced the clerks at the Old and New Minster of Winchester with Benedictine monks.³⁹⁸ Granted to the New Minster at Winchester, King Edgar's Charter commemorates the adoption of Benedictism in 964 and confirms the new regime at the religious house. Probably composed by Æthelwold, the New Minster Charter is one of the earliest reform

³⁹³ ASC A. 964. See J. A. Giles, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London, 1914).

³⁹⁴ ASC A. 959. Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, pp. 205-206.

³⁹⁵ William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum* 157, eds. R. A. B. Mynors and R. M. Thomas (Oxford, 1998), p. 253.

³⁹⁶ ASC, A. 975: 'The 8th before the Ides of July. Here Edgar died, ruler of Angles, West-Saxons' joy, and Mercians protector. Known was widely throughout many nations. 'Thæt' offspring of Edmund, o'er the ganet's-bath. Kings him widely bowed to the king, as was his due by kind. No fleet was so daring, nor army so strong, that'mid the English nation took from him aught, the while that the noble king ruled on his throne.' See J. A. Giles, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*; see John Worcester, *Chronicon*, s.a. 975, ed. Darlington and McGurk (Oxford, 1995-8), p. 424; WM, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ii. 160, ed. Mynors *et al.*, p. 260.

³⁹⁷ Æthelwold was consecrated bishop by Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury on the 29 November 963; see The ASC, [E]; [A]: 963 'In this same year abbat Æthelwold succeeded to the bishopric at Winchester, and he was consecrated on the vigil of St. Andrew: it was Sunday that day.' See Dorothy Whitelock, *English Historical Documents* (London, 1955), p. 206.

³⁹⁸ ASC (A) 964: 'In the year after he was consecrated, then made he many minsters, and drove the clerks out of the bishopric, because they would not observe any rule, and he set monks there. He made there two abbacies; one for monks, one of nuns; all which was within Winchester'. See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 207.

manuscripts. The manuscript has the unusual form of a small codex rather than that of a charter. Its luxurious and unusual form and its content suggest that the charter was regarded as a very important document. Moreover, its pristine condition implies that it was kept carefully in a safe place and was used only occasionally for display.³⁹⁹

The lavish prefatory miniature on fol. 2v of the New Minster Charter reflects the luxurious charter itself, entirely written in gold with some use of green, blue and red colours. Written in golden uncials the couplet (fol. 3r) opposite the prefatory miniature reads (fig. 5):

SIC CELSO RESIDET SOLIO QUI CONDIDIT ASTRA REX VENERANS
EADGAR PRONUS ADORAT EUM⁴⁰⁰

The couplet economically conveys to the reader the close relationship between God and the Anglo-Saxon king. For this reason, it presents, albeit in juxtaposition, only the two central figures in the miniature: God and King Edgar, the heavenly and the earthly king.

Depicted against an imposing blue background, the large golden cross on the top left of the fol. 3v is followed by King Edgar's name and title in capitals, and a proem which commemorates Edgar's donation as follows: 'King Edgar granted this privilege to the New Minster and conceded it to Almighty God and his Mother Mary, while praising his great works' (fig. 6).⁴⁰¹ The special mention to the

³⁹⁹ See Introduction, pp. 18-21.

⁴⁰⁰ 'Thus he who created the stars sits on a lofty throne; King Edgar, inclined in veneration, adores him'. See Catherine Karkov, 'King Edgar' in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, (Woodbridge, 2004), p. 88.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 88, n. 18.

Virgin Mary in the charter most likely intends to stress the Virgin's strong position in the Benedictine Reform.

Both the proem and the beginning of the first charter have gold frames. On fol. 4r, the proem of the chapter opens with an enlarged chi-rho monogram, in gold, green and red and the following words: *Omnipotents totius machinae* (fig. 6). The proem of the Charter consists of six chapters, which refer respectively to the fallen angels, the Creation and Fall of Man and the divine order restored by Christ.

Opening with the words *hinc ego Eadgar* ('hence I Edgar'), chapter VI confirms that King Edgar's salvation and placement in heaven was the outcome of his ecclesiastical reform: 'So that, attaining such great glory, placed in the heaven of Christ and his saints, furnished with a crown, I might delight in the common dwelling'.⁴⁰² What is noticeable is how closely the text reflects the iconography of the prefatory miniature, where a crowned King Edgar appears in adoration before Christ in Majesty and divine authorities in a setting that strongly reminds viewers of paradise.

In chapters VI-VII of the New Minster Charter there is an account of Edgar's monastic reform and, as in the proem, the emphasis is placed on the Christian doctrine of Fall and Redemption. A strong royal demand for intercessory prayers is also noticeable. Chapter VII points out that the main reason for the expulsion of the secular canons was their sinful conduct, which would impair the effectiveness of their intercessory prayers on behalf of the king (Chapter VII). In this respect, the document guarantees the royal protection given

⁴⁰² See Alexander R. Rumble, ed. and trans., *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents relating to the Topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman City and its Minsters* (Oxford, 2002), p. 80.

by King Edgar to the New Minster abbey in exchange for the intercessory prayers of the monastic community. Chapters XIII to XVI stress the importance of the close relationship between King Edgar and the Church for the success of the reform.

Noticeable in the New Minster Charter are the recurring parallels drawn between the recent monastic reform and biblical passages, found in the proem of the charter, referring to divine punishment and reward. The sinful canons are juxtaposed with the fallen angels and the opponents to the ecclesiastical reform are warned that they will be punished like the rebel angels. Further parallels are drawn between paradise and the reformed New Minster and between King Edgar, who brought back order in the earthly Church, and God, who restored order in heaven (Chapter VII).

The witness list (fol. 30r) in the New Minster Charter has the royal family and the main ecclesiastical reformers, Dunstan, Oswald, and Æthelwold. King Edgar grants the charter to 'Our Redeemer'. As on folio 3r, the king's name is preceded by the symbol of the cross.

+ Edgar, king of the English with divine grace grants, granting this gift of privilege to our Redeemer and His most holy place, establishing first of all the king's company of monks in that place, making the symbol of the Holy Cross with my own hand, have confirmed.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰³ '+ EGO EDGAR. diuina largiente gratia Anglorum basileus hoc priuilegii donum nostro largiens redemptori locoque eius sanctissimo primis om[n]ium regum monachorum inibi collegium constituens manu propria signum agiae cruces imprimens confirmaui'. See Alexander Rumble, ed. and trans., *Property and Piety*, pp. 92-3.

This is also suggestive of the coinage of the period, where the title of the king, on the obverse, is flanked by the symbol of the cross. The cross preceding the name and title of secular and sacred authorities can also be seen in mosaics and manuscript illumination. In the apse mosaic of St Apollinaire in Classe, in Ravenna, the name of the saint is preceded by the cross (fig. 93). In the prefatory miniature of the *Liber Vitae* Cnut's name is placed next to the golden cross with the initial 'C' touching the shaft of the cross (fig. 7). King Edgar in the New Minster Charter is flanked by the cross and the key-cross held by the Virgin Mary and St Peter. In both prefatory miniatures the symbol of the cross suggests not only apotropaic power but also intercessory efficacy.

The presence of the cross, in texts as well as on coinage, is indicative not only of the Christian faith but also of the derivation of royal authority from God. Æthelwold's subscription reiterates the same royal propagandistic overtones, and Edgar is presented as 'the most illustrious king': 'I Ethelwold, Bishop of the church of Winchester, by my modest self, have blessed with the sign of the cross the splendid munificence of the most illustrious king, the father abbot, and the monks whom I have taught, commending them to him.'⁴⁰⁴

2.1.2 King Edgar in the New Minster prefatory miniature

In Whirling Adoration

Like King Æthelstan in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, King Edgar stands all alone before divine authorities with nobody to witness the scene. With a

⁴⁰⁴ 'I Ethelwold, Bishop of the church of Winchester, by my modest self, have blessed with the sign of the cross the splendid munificence of the most illustrious king, the father abbot, and the monks whom I have taught, commending them to him.' See Francis Wormald, 'Late Anglo-Saxon Art: Some Questions and Suggestions' in *Collected Writings: Studies in Medieval Art from the Sixth to the Twelfth Centuries* (Oxford, 1982), p. 109.

sumptuous, trefoil crown on his head, the Anglo-Saxon ruler stands out amongst the rest of the haloed figures. The exalted status of the king is further stressed by two long folds of the two lower angels' drapery pointing like arrows at Edgar's crowned head. His lofty position suggests an exclusive relationship between the Anglo-Saxon king and the divine authorities establishing him as God's elect.

Like King Æthelstan in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*, Edgar is not holding any royal insignia but, instead, a small closed book in his left hand. Edgar's overemphasized hands draw attention to his gestures and his book. His ambiguous right hand gesture with three curled fingers may suggest the sign of the cross. The most puzzling part of the scene is the king's awkward twisted stance, with his head flung back, his eyes fixed on Christ. Full of grace and vitality, Edgar's almost 'dancing' posture shares the same vibrant energy as that of the floating angels and the animated foliage of the frame. This is in sharp contrast with the iconic, motionless depiction of Christ, the Virgin Mary and St Peter, who seem to supervise humanity with expressionless faces.

William Noel suggests that King Edgar in the New Minster Charter is depicted prostrating before Christ in Majesty. According to Noel, Edgar's figure is drawn from a bird's eye view and not from the side like other kneeling figures in late Anglo-Saxon art such as St Dunstan prostrating before Christ in his mid-tenth-century classbook (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. F. iv 32, fol. 1; fig. 43), and the archbishop in the initial to Psalm 1 in the Harley Psalter, produced in the first half of the eleventh century (BL, Harley MS 603, fol. 2r).⁴⁰⁵ Elzbieta Temple has

⁴⁰⁵ See also William Noel, 'The Utrecht Psalter in England: Continuity and Experiment', in Koert van der Horst, William Noel, Wilhelmina C. M. Wüstefeld, eds. *The Utrecht Psalter in Medieval Art: Picturing the Psalms of David* (Utrecht, 1996), pp. 145-14. http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_603

suggested that the king's unique posture in late Anglo-Saxon art shows continental influence, probably from the Bible of San Paolo fuori le Mura, produced in the ninth century at Rheims.⁴⁰⁶ Noel notes that the king's posture shows influence from the ninth-century Utrecht Psalter, which was in England, Canterbury, by the second half of the tenth century (Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, MS Bibl. Rhenotraiectinae I Nr 32, fol. 58r), but he also suggests that its prototype may have been from another manuscript. Tracing similarities between the figure of King Edgar and other figures in the Utrecht Psalter, Noel draws attention to the posture of a king who is looking up to the Lord in psalm 101 (fol. 58r) and also to the posture of the psalmist and of other figures with their backs to the pictorial plane looking up to the Lord (fig. 145).⁴⁰⁷

However, Edgar's idiosyncratic posture is not really compatible with the more static character of prostrating and kneeling postures. The artist seems to have focused rather on the whirling energy of the royal figure and the enigma it can release. Accordingly, Edgar's posture is depicted in motion expressing an act of worship in awe before the divine and supernatural. The king actively expresses his reverence by folding and unfolding his body before God, raising his arms, turning his head upwards and fixing his eyes on Him. His posture suggests iconographical models related rather with apocalyptic scenes than with contemplative ones engaged in prostrating and kneeling practices. This can also be suggested by the setting of the scene, not in a monastic environment but in a heavenly ambiance.

⁴⁰⁶ Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts 900-1066* (London, 1976), no 16.

⁴⁰⁷ William Noel, 'The Utrecht Psalter in England: Continuity and Experiment', pp. 120-165.

An examination of Anglo-Saxon and Continental miniatures depicting royal and monastic figures prostrating or kneeling before higher authorities may help elucidate the enigma of Edgar's distinctive posture. The depiction of several ecclesiastics, scribes, and authors prostrating or kneeling before the cross and higher monastic, sacred, divine or royal, authorities suggests their piety, humility and submission.

Dunstan is prostrating himself before Christ in the frontispiece of his mid-tenth-century classbook MS Auct. F. iv 32, fol. 1 (fig. 43); the scribe Eddui Bassan, holding a book in his hand, expresses profound humility and piety submitting himself prone at the feet of St Benedict in the Arundel Psalter, written in Christ Church Canterbury, c.1012-23 (BL, Arundel MS 155, fol. 133) (fig. 33). Similarly, Rabanus Maurus is shown kneeling humbly before the cross in the *Liber de Laudibus Sanctae Crucis*, written in Mainz in the mid-ninth century (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS 652, fol. 35v) (fig. 44).

In the Arundel Psalter, written in the first half of the eleventh century (BL, Arundel MS 155, fol. 9v) Pachomius receiving the Easter Tables is portrayed respectfully kneeling before the angel (fig. 30). In an outline drawing from an Anglo-Saxon composite manuscript, written in c.1073 (BL, Cotton MS Caligula A. xv, fol. 122v) Pachomius is prostrating himself before the angel to receive the Easter Tables (fig. 32). The author of *Encomium Emmae Reginae* is shown respectfully kneeling before Queen Emma to present his work in the frontispiece of the manuscript, written c.1041-2 (BL, MS Add. 33241, fol. 1v; fig. 36).

In some miniatures, ecclesiastics, girdled with scrolls, adopt a kneeling frontal posture and turn their heads upwards looking at a higher authority. Thus, behaving like monastic billboards, the monks display the contents of the texts and

spread the word of God. Such a frontal kneeling position is adopted by the monk girdled with a scroll before St Benedict in the *Regularis Concordia*, written in the second quarter of the eleventh century (BL, Cotton MS Tiberius A. iii fol. 117v); he who also has his left hand raised in a gesture of blessing (fig. 34). The frontal kneeling posture with the head turned upwards is repeated by another ecclesiastic in the frontispiece of the *Regularis Concordia*. The monk, girdled with a scroll—probably the *Regularis Concordia*—is looking up to King Edgar, Dunstan and Æthelwold seated in Majesty (fig. 37).

In an outline drawing of the eleventh-century Hymnal and Ælfric's Grammar (Durham Cathedral, MS B. iii.32, fol. 56v), the same posture is adopted by a tonsured monk, depicted below the two seated and haloed ecclesiastics, probably Dunstan and Æthelwold. Girdled with a scroll the monk turns his head upwards to look at the prelates (fig. 38). In Byzantine art a similar frontal kneeling position is adopted by the apostles James and John who raise their arms in awe before Christ transfigured in the apse mosaic of the Transfiguration, c.565, in St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai (fig. 143).

In some miniatures the concurrence of prostrating and kneeling figures in the same scene probably suggests the artist's attempt to intensify the drama of an act of submission and humility. The miniature with Count Dietrich of Holland and his wife Hildegard before St Adalbert, in a gospel-book written in Lotharingia, c.940-70 (The Hague, Royal Library, MS 761/1, fol. 215; fig. 142) presents an example of the prostrating and kneeling position occurring in the same scene. With raised arms, upright torso and looking up, Count Dietrich of Holland is in the process of kneeling or rising before St Adalbert while behind him his wife Hildegard is prostrated keeping her head flat on the ground.

Furthermore, in the Old English Hexateuch, written in St Augustine's Canterbury, in the second quarter of the eleventh century (BL, Cotton MS Claudius B. iv, fol. 29r) Abraham is depicted adopting successively the kneeling and then the prostrating posture before God descending a ladder (fig. 154). This probably suggests the artist's attempt to differentiate the character and strength of the two postures. Furthermore, by employing both postures acted out in the scene by the same figure, Abraham, the artist conveys to the viewer a cinematographic movement that accelerates the narrative.

The distinctive character of Edgar's posture is also unique in Carolingian, Ottonian and Byzantine art. Royal figures are depicted prostrating or kneeling in miniatures and mosaics but none of them has the compelling ambiguity of Edgar's posture. In Ottonian art, Henry II and Kunigunde are depicted on the gold Basel Altar Frontal, c. 1020 (Paris, Musée National du Moyen Age et des Thermes de Cluny) prostrating themselves at the feet of Christ (fig. 141). Byzantine emperors are often depicted prostrated before Christ and the Virgin Mary. In St Sophia, Istanbul, the narthex mosaic, from the late ninth or early tenth century shows an emperor prostrating himself before Christ in Majesty (fig. 140).⁴⁰⁸ Drawn in profile these prostrated royal figures lack movement and they keep their head and eyes modestly to the ground suggesting piety and humility and expressing complete submission and profound contrition.

Kneeling royal figures present a higher degree of movement than the prostrated ones since they keep their torso and head upright and occasionally look

⁴⁰⁸ The miniature may represent Emperor Leo VI (r.886-912) doing penance for his father Basil I (r.867-86, the founder of the Macedonian dynasty), who murdered his co-emperor, Michael III (842-67). It may also represent Emperor Constantine VII (r.913-59), doing penance for his father, Leo VI, who married four times, against church law, in his desire for a male heir. See John Lawden, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (London, 1997) p. 190.

upwards. In Carolingian manuscript illumination, Charles the Bald is depicted kneeling before the cross in his ninth-century prayerbook (Munich, Residenz, Schatzkammer, ff. 38v-39r; fig. 98). In Ottonian art, Conrad II and Queen Gisela are depicted kneeling before Christ in the Codex Aureus, written in Echternach between 1043 and 1046 (Madrid, Escorial, Bibl. Monasterio St Lorenzo, Cod. Vitr.17, fol. 3r; fig. 144). The Codex Aureus was commissioned by Henry III (r.1039-1056; emperor from 1046) and donated to Speyer Cathedral. On the next folio (Cod. Vitr.17, fol. 3r) Henry III and Queen Agnes are depicted bowing deeply before the enthroned Virgin Mary (fig. 144).

The emperor's figure is closer to that of King Edgar in the sense that it performs a movement (an act of veneration) frozen in time before its completion. Handing the open gospel book to the Virgin, Henry III is bowing humbly and deeply on his tiptoes before her with his bending knees almost reaching the ground (fig. 144). His posture, suspended between kneeling and bowing, as in the case of King Edgar, injects momentum and life into the scene.

Spirited Frame

King Edgar's posture should also be examined in relation to the frame of the miniature. The composition, painted on purple vellum, is framed by two parallel golden bars covered by an acanthus motif and luscious foliage twisting and intermingling in playful symmetry.⁴⁰⁹ The sumptuous frame with its luscious foliage, the luxurious purple and gold paint, followed by rich blue, green, yellow

⁴⁰⁹ The acanthus border derives from the vine-scroll and other foliate motifs of King Æthelstan portrait, the Cuthbert embroideries and related works see Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church* (Oxford and New York), pp. 119-20 and at 200.

and red hues, and above all the overwhelming presence of divine figures may well suggest that the scene takes place in heaven and not on earth.

Accordingly, the pictorial plane inhabited by God, saints and angels suggests a sacred *topos* and as such also implies that conventional time is suspended and replaced by sacred time, that is to say, eternity through salvation. King Edgar's exclusive entrance into the sacred space of divine authorities implies that the Anglo-Saxon king is God's elect. Elevated and separated from the rest of the people, Edgar enjoys maximum proximity to the deity and, eventually, the promise of salvation.

The impression that Edgar has just triumphantly entered into divine space is strongly suggested by the way the king's right foot overlaps the lower border of the lush frame with his right foot. Asa Mittman and Susan Kim have stressed the important role of the frame in manuscript decoration in Anglo-Saxon art. By contrast to Continental and Byzantine practices, the frame in late Anglo-Saxon art is an integral part of the narrative and the actions of the figures and presents an idiosyncratic iconography. Occasionally, the frame functions as scaffolding for the figures to stand on, to break through, or to stand in front of it. Sometimes, it is also used as an extension of the architecture or the landscape within the image.⁴¹⁰ King Edgar's right foot overlaps the frame as does King Cnut's sword in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*. In both cases the kings use the frame for a majestic entrance into the pictorial space.

Herbert Broderick has also highlighted the idiosyncratic attitudes of the Anglo-Saxon artists towards the frame during the tenth and eleventh centuries.

⁴¹⁰ See Asa Simon Mittman and Susan M. Kim. 'Anglo-Saxon Frames of Reference: Framing the Real in the Wonders of the East', *Different Visions: A Journal of New Perspectives on Medieval Art*, Issue 2 (June, 2010), pp. 1-25.

Innovative approaches in late Anglo-Saxon manuscript illumination produce frames that are tangible, inhabited, and vigorously advance the narrative.⁴¹¹ The luscious foliate frames in the New Minster Charter and the Benedictional of Æthelwold celebrate kingship and special events and personages in the Church calendar. Inhabited with birds and a lion, the foliage in the frame of the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* rejoices in the contemplative character of the scene. Accordingly, the drama is enhanced when Lucifer grasps the frame in the Old English Hexateuch (Cotton MS Claudius B. iv, fol. 2r) and the impact on the viewer is awe-inspiring when, in apocalyptic scenes, the ascendant Christ 'disappears' through the top of the frame leaving only his feet to be seen.⁴¹²

The breaking of the image through the frame suggests an act of invasion into the space of the text and the viewer. By crossing the boundary between their world and the text around them the figures/images assert their reality to the spectator and thus the plausibility of their narrative. Opening their transcendent world for us the spirited Anglo-Saxon frames reflect Anselm's ideas about reality. According to Anselm 'the highest form of reality is divine, and therefore timeless and spaceless ... What is real is a representation, and what is represented can lead to a higher reality'.⁴¹³ And as Asa Mittman and Susan Kim note: 'Indeed, it was that which remained unseen that formed the core of medieval aspirations and fear:

⁴¹¹ Herbert Broderick, 'Some Attitudes towards the Frame in Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries', *Artibus et Historiae*, III /5 (1982), pp. 31-42.

⁴¹² For the figure of Lucifer grasping the frame see Benjamin C. Withers, 'Satan's Mandorla: Translation, Transformation, and Interpretation in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in Colum Hourihane, ed., *Insular and Anglo-Saxon Art and Thought in the Early Medieval Period*, (Pennsylvania, 2011), figs. 2, 3.

⁴¹³ See Asa Simon Mittman and Susan M. Kim. 'Anglo-Saxon Frames of Reference: Framing the Real in the Wonders of the East', *Different Visions: A Journal of New Perspectives on Medieval Art*, Issue 2 (June, 2010), p. 19; See also Martin Foys, *Virtually Anglo-Saxon: Old Media, New Media, and Early Medieval Studies in the Late Age of Print* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), pp. 52, 67. Foys refers to Anselm, *Orationes sive Meditationes*, in *Anselm Cantuariensis archiepiscopi opera Omnia et fides codicum*, 6 vols. ed. F. S. Schmitt (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1946-1961), 3: 1-91.

Jerusalem, heaven and God, demons, hell and Satan. Certainly, nothing was more real in the medieval worldview than what we might interpret as unseen intangibles'⁴¹⁴

2.2 The Flamboyant King

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* presents Edgar in a very favourable light as shown on the following excerpt:

He upreared God's glory wide,
and loved God's law,
and bettered the public peace,
most of the kings
who were before him
in man's memory.
And God him eke helped,
that kings and earls
gladly to him bowed,
and were submissive
to that that he willed;
and without war he ruled all
that himself would.

Even when the *Chronicle* refers to Edgar's weaknesses, it does so only in order to highlight his royal grandeur by showing that his good deeds were so great so as to render him impervious to any loss of divine favour or change of

⁴¹⁴ Asa Mittman and Susan Kim, 'Anglo-Saxon Frames of Reference: Framing the Real in the Wonders of the East', p. 20.

fortune. 'One misdeed he did all too much that he foreign vices loved, and heathen customs within his land brought too oft, and outlandish men hither enticed, and harmful people allured to this land.'⁴¹⁵ Similarly, to the iconography of the prefatory miniature in the New Minster Charter, the *Chronicle* portrays Edgar as God's elect. 'But God grant him that his good deeds be more availing than his misdeeds or his soul's protection on the longsome course'.⁴¹⁶ Accordingly, God is so pleased with the king that not only He protects Edgar's rule but also He disregards his few human transgressions.

The flamboyant depiction of King Edgar in the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter contrasts with the modest demeanour of King Æthelstan in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti*. Edgar's amazing whirling pose is as 'unusual' as the format of the New Minster Charter and as grand and 'unusual' as his imperial coronation at Bath in 973. This may very possibly suggest that the king had an affinity for 'unusual' yet ostentatious displays of royal power. Nelson notes that, under Edgar's kinship, the imperial style in charters became very prominent.⁴¹⁷ Occasionally, the king would stylise himself as *basileos anglorum et rex atque imperator...regum et nationum infra fines brittaniae commorantium* or Edgar, 'emperor' of the whole of Albion (S 775).⁴¹⁸ The word 'basileos', which suggests Byzantine influence, had first appeared on Æthelstan's coinage.

⁴¹⁵ ASC (A) 958: 'One misdeed he did all too much that he foreign vices loved, and heathen customs within his land brought too oft, and outlandish men hither enticed, and harmful people allured to this land'. See J. A. Giles, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (London, 1914), p. 79.

⁴¹⁶ ASC (A) 958. See J. A. Giles, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, p. 78.

⁴¹⁷ Janet Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals' in *Early Medieval Kinship*, ed. P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds, 1977) p. 303.

⁴¹⁸ Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London, 1885-1893), no. 1201. See also Simon Keynes, 'The West Saxon Charters of King Æthelwulf and his Sons', *English Historical Review* (1994), pp. 1109-49.

A taste for imperial lavishness runs also through the iconography of the Benedictional of Æthelwold, produced in Winchester c.971-984 (BL, Add. M49598). More specifically, in the Benedictional the iconography of Christ is adjusted to give it imperial connotations. It is against this background that the iconography in the prefatory of the New Minster Charter takes shape with Edgar in the role of 'imperial king of kings' purposefully paralleled with Christ.⁴¹⁹ In other words, the use of purple and gold colours in the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter is not only in accordance with Edgar's imperial style of kingship but also with the recurring parallel drawn between the Anglo-Saxon king and Christ. The colour purple is closely associated with imperial early Christian, Byzantine and Carolingian manuscripts such as the Vienna Genesis, Rossano Gospels and Coronation Gospels.⁴²⁰ Catherine Karkov underlines that purple symbolises royalty and the blood of Christ whereas the combination of gold and purple is linked to the dual nature of Christ, his passion and his resurrection.⁴²¹

2.2.1 Edgar Rex Anglorum

On his coinage, King Edgar appears with the title *EDGAR REX*, occasionally with the inscription *Anglorum* or *To Bri* (figs. 185, 186). His coins show similarities with those of King Æthelstan, as both kings issued large coinage with fine workmanship and engaged a large number of mints and moneyers.⁴²² King

⁴¹⁹ Robert Deshman 'Christus rex et magi reges: Kinship and Christology in Ottonian and Anglo-Saxon Art', *FS* 10 (1976), pp. 367-405, esp. 390ff. For Edgar's imperial outlook, see especially pp. 399-400.

⁴²⁰ The sixth-century Vienna Genesis (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. theol. gr. 31); Rossano Gospels (Rossano, Cathedral Treasury); the late eighth-century Coronation Gospels (Vienna, Weltliche Schatzkammer).

⁴²¹ Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge 2004), pp. 86-7.

⁴²² Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 26; The number of mints after King Edgar's reform is about seventy while before the reform is about twenty-five and thirty-five. See Michael R. H. Dolley and D. M.

Edgar's coinage has five major types and its earliest portrait type has the bust to the right.⁴²³

On the obverse of the earlier portrait type, King Edgar is crowned with the bust to the right and the legend reads *Edgar Rex*. A small encircled cross features in the middle of the reverse surrounded by a circular legend, with or without the name of the mint. The most common issue is a 'non-portrait' type with the name of the moneyer on the reverse and with four main varieties of lettering, associated with different parts of England.⁴²⁴ Some of King Edgar's earlier coins show strong influence from the coinage of an earlier Anglo-Saxon period such as the *Halfpenny of London*, which echoes the iconography of the coinage of his great-grandfather, King Alfred.⁴²⁵

After the monetary reform in 973, every issue has the name of the mint, the number of the mints from thirty-five reaches seventy, and recoinage takes place every six years.⁴²⁶ Furthermore, on the obverse, the royal bust faces left, and on

Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. Michael R. H. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 147.

⁴²³ Types: 1) O: small cross R: name in two lines, crosses in between (sometimes rosettes and annulets) usually without the name of the mint 2) O: small cross R: floral design, Oswald 3) O: small cross R: flower above name 4) O: small cross or rosette in both sides, with and without name of the mint 5) O: bust to right R: small cross 6) small bust to left (cf. coins of Edward the Martyr) R: small cross, with the name of the mint; For the earlier portrait type see Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, p. 140.

⁴²⁴ BMC type I; pl. xiii, 1-4. See Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar' p. 144 (BMC type I; pl. xiii, 1-4).

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 140, 156, pl. ixI, 7, 8, 18: King Alfred's coins; The halfpenny of London: pl. xiv, 16.

⁴²⁶ BMC type VI, pl. xiii, 15. Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', p. 144; C. Karkov, 'Edgar and the Royal Women of the Monastic Reform' in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 103-4. For the interdependence between a mint and a borough, see Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', pp. 147-8.

the reverse the king reintroduces the names of the mint and the moneyer, following the practice of King Æthelstan (fig. 185,186).⁴²⁷

In an attempt to create a centralized administration, King Edgar prevented regional involvement in the monetary system, first by introducing a single currency circulating all over England, secondly by centralizing the production of dies and, thirdly, by replacing local administrators with royal ones.⁴²⁸ As Marion Archibold and Christopher Blunt suggest, 'Edgar seems to have applied to his reform the same tactic he used for his monastic reform: groups of people were replaced in favour of others who would be much more controllable by the royalty.'⁴²⁹

King Edgar does not appear with a helmet on his coinage as do King Æthelstan and King Cnut, who were known for their military achievements.

On the obverse of an issue introduced after Edgar's monetary reform, the legend reads *Edgar Rex Anglorum* and the king is depicted facing left with a diadem with ribbons, a brooch (fig. 186). The royal bust is encircled, probably to make space for the king's long title on the legend. The clean-shaven diademed image of King Edgar is different from that of the crowned bearded Anglo-Saxon ruler in the prefatory miniatures of the New Minster Charter and the *Regularis Concordia*,

⁴²⁷ In the thirteenth century, Roger of Wendover, a monk of St Albas, records the numismatic reform under King Edgar in the year 975, *Deinde per totam Angliam novam fieri praecepit monetam, quia vetus vitio tonsorum adeo erat corrupta, ut vix nummus obolum appenderet in statera*. See H. O. Coxe, ed., Roger of Wendover, *Flores Historiarum* (Oxford, 1841) vol. I, p. 416: *Deinde per totam Angliam novam fieri praecepit monetam, quia vetus vitio tonsorum adeo erat corrupta, ut vix nummus obolum appenderet in statera*; Dolley and Metcalf agree that Edgar's reform took place in the late years of his reign but do not accept the year 975 see Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', pp. 136-168.

⁴²⁸ King Edgar developed King Æthelstan's idea for single currency all over the kingdom; see P. Wormald, *The Making of the English Law* (Oxford, 1999), p. 315, II Eg 4-4: 3.

⁴²⁹ Marion Archibold and Christopher E. Blunt, *British Museum Anglo-Saxon Coins, V: Athelstan to the Reform of Edgar 924-c.973*, Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles (SCBI) 34 (London, 1986), p. 195.

written in the second quarter of the eleventh century (BL, Cotton MS Tiberius A. iii, fol. 2v). Edgar's diadem shows the influence of King Alfred's *Two Emperors* issue. Diadems are related to the Roman period and suggest imperial aspirations. King Edgar's spectacular coronation at Bath strongly suggests that the king was attracted by the grandeur of the Roman imperial past.

On the reverse, the circular legend has the name of the mint. The small encircled cross in the middle of the reverse suggests that the Anglo-Saxon king and his laws are under the protection of God.

King Edgar's plans for the coinage reform earlier than 973 can be traced in his Andover Code (II-III Edgar). Dolley and Metcalf suggest that Edgar's numismatic reform promoted the interdependence between a borough and a mint and created a strong network of mints. The numismatic reform facilitated people's approach to the mints since the king established recoinage every six years.⁴³⁰

In the pursuit of centralized administration, Edgar prevented regional involvement in the monetary system by introducing a single currency circulating all over England, by centralizing the production of dies and, by replacing local administrators with royal ones.⁴³¹ As Marion Archibold and Christopher Blunt suggest, 'Edgar seems to have applied to his reform the same tactic he used for his monastic reform: groups of people were replaced in favour of others who would be much more controllable by the royalty.'⁴³²

It can also be suggested that regular recoinage was the actual reason behind Edgar's monetary reform as it helped the king to control revenues all over

⁴³⁰ Marion Archibold and Christopher Blunt, *British Museum Anglo-Saxon Coins, V: Æthelstan to the Reform of Edgar, 924-c. 973*, Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles (SCBI) 34 (London, 1986), p. 152.

⁴³¹ King Edgar developed King Æthelstan's idea for a single currency all over the kingdom; see P. Wormald, *The Making of the English Law* (Oxford, 1999), p. 315, II Eg 4-4: 3.

⁴³² Archibold and Blunt, *Æthelstan to the Reform of Edgar, 924-c. 973*, p. 195.

his kingdom.⁴³³ Recoinage was also a source of further income since every time that the old coins were replaced by new ones, the moneyers paid money to the king for the new dies and the people had to pay fees to the moneyers in order to exchange their coins with the new ones.

King Edgar developed further the Church's taxation system, already established by King Æthelstan and King Edmund, and introduced harsher punishments for those who would not paid tithes. The king included 'Rome-money' in the range of dues, giving explicit instructions for the administration and penalties for non-payment. In his ordinance, King Edgar refers to 'Romfeoh' as the 'hearth-penny' and charges harsh penalties if the tax is not paid by St Peter's Massday.⁴³⁴ And in the Andover Code (II-III Eg), King Edgar urges:

4. And every hearth-penny is to be paid by St. Peter's day.

4.1. And he who has not rendered it by the due day is to take it to Rome, and 30 pence in addition, and then to bring back a document showing that he has handed over the amount there. And when he comes home, he is to pay 120 shillings to the king. 4.2. And if again he will not pay it, he is again to take it to Rome, with another such compensation; and when he comes home, he is to pay 200 shillings to the king. 4.3. On the third occasion, if he still will not pay, he is to forfeit all that he owns.⁴³⁵

⁴³³ Blunt and Archibold suggest that Edgar's coinage reform was an attempt to strengthen royal control and to promote a centralised administration. See Marion Archibold and Christopher E. Blunt, *Æthelstan to the Reform of Edgar, 924-c.973* (London, 1986), pp. xxii, p. 195.

⁴³⁴ St Peter's Massday, i.e. 'Lammas': the feast of St. Peter's Chains (1st of August).

⁴³⁵ Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1999), p. 315, II Eg 4-4:3; Dorothy Whitelock, ed., 'King Edgar's code at Andover (?) (II and III Edgar, 959-963), in *English Historical Documents, 500-1042* (London, 1979), pp. 434-435.

2.2.2 Iconographical models

The Regularis Concordia prefatory miniature

With King Edgar's strong support for the monastic reformers, Archbishop Duncan, Æthelwold, bishop of Winchester, and Oswald, bishop of Worcester, St Benedict's monastic order was established in the kingdom. The Old Minster was reformed by Æthelwold on twenty-first of February 964, the first Saturday in Lent. Monks from Abingdon, chanting, walked into the minster and moved the clerks out of the religious house; in other words, the secular monks were driven out and replaced by the monks of Abingdon early in 964, and the first regular abbot was Æthelwold's pupil Æthelgar.⁴³⁶

Before the Coronation at Bath in 973, the *Regularis Concordia*, the English version of the Benedictine Rule, was compiled for the kingdom. The document, probably written by Æthelwold, expresses, in the proem, the mutual respect between Edgar and his ecclesiastics. The prologue and epilogue of the document place considerable emphasis on the alliance between King Edgar, Queen Ælfthryth and the monastic reformers.

King Edgar summoned a Synodal Council at Winchester (970-973). To this assembly of bishops, abbots and abbesses, the King directed a letter of admonition and advice which was received with enthusiastic approval. Monks were invited over from Fleury and Ghent and some of their customs were embodied in a code covering the whole range of the monastic life—the *Regularis Concordia*—to which all vowed obedience.⁴³⁷ The Council at Winchester proclaimed a fully organised

⁴³⁶ ASC (A) 964 See J. A. Giles, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*; M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom, eds. *Wulfstan of Winchester, Vita S. Æthelwoldi: The Life of St Æthelwold* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 36-7.

⁴³⁷ Stenton 1971, p. 452; Dom Thomas Symons, 'Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation', in D. Parsons, ed., *Tenth Century Studies* (London and Chichester, 1975), p. 39.

system of monastic life for men, under the guardianship of Edgar, and for women, under that of his consort, Ælfthryth, King Edgar also commissioned Æthelwold to translate the *Rule of St Benedict* into Old English.

The proem of the *Regularis Concordia* gives an account of the monastic reform and the work of the Council of Winchester. Set out in the twelve chapters that follow are the monks' daily life through the year, the liturgy of the more important seasons and feasts, certain special features of claustral discipline, the reception of guests, the daily Maundy, the care of sick brethren and the rites accompanying the death and burial of a monk.⁴³⁸ A short epilogue, found only in one of the two surviving manuscripts, contains Edgar's exemption of religious houses from the payment of the 'heriot' on the death of an abbot or abbess.⁴³⁹ The main difference in the English version is the number of daily prayers dedicated to the King, Queen and benefactors which were recited by the monks. They were a total of eighteen psalms, twenty three collects and, usually, the morrow (or early) Mass.⁴⁴⁰

In the prefatory outline drawing from an eleventh-century manuscript of the *Regularis Concordia* (BL, Cotton MS Tiberius, A. iii, fol. 2v), King Edgar is depicted enthroned between two ecclesiastics, usually interpreted as St Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester and St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury; they are both holding a scroll, which may represent the *Regularis Concordia* (fig. 37).⁴⁴¹ In

⁴³⁸ D. T. Symons, 'Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation', in D. Parsons, ed., *Tenth-Century Studies* (London and Chichester, 1975), p. 43.

⁴³⁹ For the tax payable to the King on the death of persons of rank see: *Regularis Concordia*, ed., Symons (1953), p. 69.

⁴⁴⁰ D. T. Symons, 'Regularis Concordia: History and Derivation', pp. 37-59.

⁴⁴¹ Withers suggests that the scroll is a sign of oral rather than written production (p. 39). See Benjamin Withers, 'Interaction of Word and Image in Anglo-Saxon Art, II; Scrolls and Codex in the frontispiece to the *Regularis Concordia*', *OEN* 31:1 (1997), pp. 38-40.

his iconic, frontal pose, wearing a sumptuous crown and gazing ahead, King Edgar appears majestic.

The two ecclesiastics and the monk kneeling below the king turn to look at him, intensifying the sense of royal grandeur. Edgar's iconic status and the hieratic overtones of his long robes, unusual for an Anglo-Saxon king, is reminiscent of Christ in Majesty in the Benedictional of Æthelwold (BL, Additional, M49598, fol. 91; fig. 60) and the imperial portraits of Otto III (figs. 107, 108, 110).

Edgar's robes—unusually long for an Anglo-Saxon king—give him a clerical aspect reminding the onlooker of the king's support of and leading role in the monastic reform. This is very different depiction from the one in the New Minster Charter, where he is depicted in veneration before divine authorities with raised arms. However, like King Æthelstan in the *Vitae Sancti Cuthberti* and the miniature in the lost MS Otho B. ix, King Edgar, in the only two surviving miniatures of him, is not depicted carrying any royal insignia but texts. As in the case of the King Æthelstan, this suggests Edgar's awareness of the importance of literacy and its propagandistic power in the strengthening of kingship.

In the Aachen Gospels, written in Reichenau, c.996 (Aachen, Cathedral Treasury, Clm. 4453, ff. 15v-16r), Otto III is depicted in majesty holding a *globus cruciger* in his left hand (fig. 107). The symbols of the four evangelists hold a scroll before the enthroned emperor. The scroll placed before the emperor is reminiscent of the scroll held by Edgar and the two ecclesiastics in the miniature of the *Regularis Concordia*. This iconographic formula seems to divide the emperor's head from his body and to function as a shield protecting and extoling the royal figure. By not holding the scroll, Otto III draws more attention to his exalted status.

In Bamberg Apocalypse, written c. 1001-2 (Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, MS Bibl. 140, fol. 59v) Otto III in Majesty, holding a crozier and the globe with the cross, is flanked by St Peter and St Paul. Once more, Otto's frontal and motionless posture, impervious to any presence or reverence, suggests his exalted godlike status (fig. 108). A similar representation of Otto is in the Gospel Book of Otto III, written c.998-1001 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4453, fol. 24) (fig.110). Seated in majesty and surrounded by his entourage, Otto III reflects the iconic character and godlike nature of the Ottonian monarchy.

Orans and Rotating figures in Rear view

In the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter, the king's posture body rotating in veneration with raised arms is also reminiscent of the *orans* posture, which goes back to the early Christian art. For instance, one of the oldest Christian sarcophagi, dating from the first half of the third century (Rome, Santa Maria Antiqua; fig. 89), and an early fourth-century sarcophagus (Rome, Lateran Museum, no. 161) depict the deceased veiled in *orans* stance (fig. 90). An early fourth-century grave inscription from a Roman catacomb (Rome, inner courtyard of the Lateran Museum) shows a veiled woman in *orans* posture (fig. 91). Both sides of the cover of the *Memoria Petri*, a mid-fifth-century ivory reliquary, found at Samagher c.400 and now kept in Pula (Italian Pola), depict worshippers in *orans* posture visiting the *Memoria Petri*, which was over the tomb of the apostle in Old St. Peter's on the Vatican Hill (fig. 92 a, b).

In the sixth-century apse mosaic from Sant'Apollinare in Classe, near Ravenna, Saint Apollinare also adopts the *orans* posture (fig. 93). An eleventh-century copy of an ivory of Egyptian origin from the late fifth or the early sixth century (Milan, Castello Sforzesco) shows St Menas in his *memoria*, in the Egypt

desert. The martyr, dressed as a soldier, is in frontal position and has his arms raised in the *orans* posture (fig. 94).

The *orans* figures stand frontally with arms raised at the height of their shoulders or at the height of their head and having both palms facing the onlooker, with the four fingers together and thumbs spread apart. In comparison with an *orans* stance, King Edgar's posture in the New Minster Charter is more elaborate. His arms are raised above his head. He holds a small closed book in his left hand whereas three of his right hand fingers are held in a gesture which may suggest the sign of the cross. This gesture is repeated by the king and Bishop Æthelwold in the prefatory miniature of the *Regularis Concordia* (BL, Cotton MS Tiberius A. iii, fol. 2v; fig. 37). And again we find this kind of gesture in the Lichfield angel, an Anglo-Saxon polychrome sculpture from the shrine of St Chad, at Lichfield, c.780-800 (fig. 23). Here, the angel's right arm is raised, and the thumb, the index and the middle finger of his hand are stretched out together while the other two are curled together suggesting the byzantine gesture of blessing.⁴⁴²

King Edgar's dynamic, whirling posture, with open legs and outstretched arms as if he is dancing, is comparable to the standing figure of the Ethiopian King *Cepheus* in the manuscript *Aratea*, written in Lorraine in the second quarter of the ninth century (Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Voss. Lat. Q, fol. 26v; fig. 99).⁴⁴³ The same whirling pose is adopted by King David in the frontispiece to *Psalms* in the *Vivian Bible*, written in Tours c. 846 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale,

⁴⁴² See François Garnier, *Le Langage de l'Image Au Moyen Age: Signification and Symbolique* (Paris, 1989); Jean-Claude Schmitt, 'The Rational of Gestures; Third to Thirteenth Centuries' in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, eds. Jan Bremmer and Herman Roodenburg (Ithaca, 1992), pp. 59-70.

⁴⁴³ Cepheus was the Ethiopian King of the Greek myth. After his death the Gods raised him among the stars as they did his wife, Cassiopeia, and his daughter, Andromeda.

MS lat. 1, fol. 215v; fig. 48). In the middle of a mandorla, usually reserved for images of Christ in Majesty, King David, with a sumptuous crown on his head, is depicted dancing and playing his harp, surrounded by guards, the Crethi and Plethi, his musicians, Asaph, Heman, Ethan, and Jenuthan and four female figures bearing palms outside the mandorla (fig. 41).⁴⁴⁴

Carolingian manuscript illuminations also feature standing figures with raised arms, occasionally in rear view or in three-quarter rear view, with their heads raised in profile and their arms raised in a gesture of acclamation. In the Bible of San Paolo fuori le mura, written in Reims (?) c.870 (Rome, Basilica di San Paolo fuori le Mura, MS Lat. 1, fol. 50 (Ixxviii) v) the frontispiece to Deuteronomy, depicts the final oration of Moses, his vision on Mount Nebo and his death (fig. 95). Some of the figures in the attentive assembly below Moses are standing with arms raised in a gesture of acclamation.

The same posture is adopted by several armed men depicted in rear view, in the Frontispiece to the Proverbs, from the Bible of San Paolo fuori le mura, written probably in Reims c.870 (Rome, Basilica di San Paolo fuori le Mura, fol. 188 (clxxxv) v), who look up to Solomon enthroned and acclaim his judgement on the two women (fig. 82). Additionally, a prelate standing with raised arms and in rear view before Charles the Bald is depicted in the *Presentation of the Bible to Charles the Bald* in the Vivian Bible, written in Tours c.846 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 1, fol. 423). Standing in the middle of the group of ecclesiastics in the

⁴⁴⁴ The female figures have been interpreted as Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance. The half-nude, dancing David may have been derived from a representation of his return of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem see I Chronicles 15:15-29; II Samuel 6:14-16, while images of David with two female figures—personifications of wisdom and power of prophecy—are known in later Byzantine art. See Florentine Mutherich and Joachim Gaehde, *Carolingian Painting* (London, 1977), p. 79.

foreground, the prelate he has his back turned to the onlooker and faces Charles enthroned, above, in a similar posture to that of King Edgar (fig. 97).

The Benedictional of Æthelwold

Lavish decoration can also be found in the twenty-eight full-page miniatures of the Benedictional of Æthelwold, produced in Winchester c.971-5 (BL, Additional MS 49598).⁴⁴⁵ Written in Latin, partly in gold ink, the Benedictional of Æthelwold is a liturgical book, which contains special prayers used by the bishop when pronouncing a blessing at mass.⁴⁴⁶ The lavish use of gold in the manuscript, the vibrant hues of purple, green, blue and red, together with the exuberant acanthus motif, and the elaborate frames, characteristic of the Winchester School of illumination, all recall the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter. The majestic postures and the energetic movement of the figures, who are seen, at times, overlapping the border, present further similarities with King Edgar in the New Minster Charter.

The Benedictional of Æthelwold shows an innovative royal iconography, constantly drawing parallels between Christ and the Anglo-Saxon monarch.⁴⁴⁷ The iconography of the prefatory in the New Minster Charter with the depiction of King Edgar in a Christ-like attitude conveys the same message.

In the Benedictional of Æthelwold, royal overtones are further stressed by the depiction of sumptuous crowns held or worn by biblical figures and saints,

⁴⁴⁵ The surviving miniatures depict the major festivals of the liturgical year and some of the most important saints.

⁴⁴⁶ Each of the principal festivals of the church year and a number of the most important saints, including St Swithun Winchester's special patron, are represented among its 28 surviving miniatures.

⁴⁴⁷ Robert Deshman 'Christus rex et magi reges: Kinship and Christology in Ottonian and Anglo-Saxon Art', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 10 (1976), pp. 367-405, esp. 390 ff. and pp. 399-400.

such as in the *Adoration of the Magi* (fol. 24v) (fig. 63); the *Death and Coronation of the Virgin* (fol. 102v) (fig. 67); *St Benedict*, seated and holding an arched trefoil crown in his left hand (fol. 99v) (fig. 62). Robert Deshman points out that the manuscript was probably created to celebrate the coronation of King Edgar and his queen in 973.⁴⁴⁸ This is quite possible if one considers the luxurious decoration and strong royal propaganda conveyed in the miniatures.⁴⁴⁹

The prefatory poem (ff. 4v-5r) in the *Benedictional of Æthelwold* tells the reader that the manuscript was written by the monk Godeman at the request of Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester (963-84), the great scholar and monastic reformer, for his personal use and that the bishop took a personal interest in its decoration.

A bishop, the great Æthelwold, whom the Lord had made patron of Winchester, ordered a certain monk subject to him to write the present book...He commanded also to be made in this book many frames well adorned and filled with various figures decorated with many beautiful colours and with gold...Let all who look upon this book pray always that after the term of the flesh I may abide in heaven—Godeman the scribe, as a suppliant, earnestly asks this.

The name of the painter of the miniatures is not known to us although it has been suggested that the artist was Bishop Æthelwold himself, on the basis that he was also major patron of the arts and, allegedly, a skilled worker in precious

⁴⁴⁸ Robert Deshman, *The Iconography of the Full-page Miniatures of the Benedictional of Æthelwold* (Princeton, 1969), p. 230.

⁴⁴⁹ Robert Deshman 'Christus rex et magi reges: Kingship and Christology in Ottonian and Anglo-Saxon Art', p. 351.

metals.⁴⁵⁰ As Richard Gameson has suggested, Æthelwold's royal background, his close relationship with King Edgar as well as the proximity of the minsters to the royal palace at Winchester, were major contributors in the formation of the distinctive luxurious artistic style in manuscript illumination, associated with the reformed minsters.⁴⁵¹

2.2.3 The Spectacular Coronation at Bath

In the late Anglo-Saxon period, the close relationship between the king and the Church was based on directives already established in Frankish kingdoms. In this respect, the Anglo-Saxon king was God's elect and anointed and his authority was directed and protected by God.⁴⁵² The king supported the church with laws, generous donations of land while also collaborating closely with bishops and prelates in ecclesiastical matters. In turn, ecclesiastics participated in state matters as the king's advisers. They were actively involved in the formation of the law and in the composition of charters, grants and writs, with their names featuring often under that of the king. Anglo-Saxon writings, dated as early as the ninth century, refer to the king's divine right to rule: 'It must be noted again that kings gain their realms by God's favour and lose them by His disfavour.'⁴⁵³ And it is 'Jesus Christ,

⁴⁵⁰ *The Chartulary or Register of the Abbey of St Werburgh, Chester*, ed. James Tait, 2 vols., Chetham Society 79, 82 (Manchester, 1920-1923) I, no. 1; S 667.

⁴⁵¹ Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church* (Oxford, 1995), p. 255. Æthelwold was member of the royal household of King Æthelstan; he had been King Edgar's tutor in the past and he had a leading role in Edgar's witan.

⁴⁵² According to the ASC, in 853, at the age of five, King Alfred the Great was sent to Rome, where he was confirmed by Pope Leo IV, who 'anointed him as a king'.

⁴⁵³ Grant by King Ceowulf I of Mercia to Archbishop Wulfred at Witenagemot on occasion of the royal consecration, September 17, A.D. 822. See Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London, 1885-1893), no. 370; A. W. Haddan and W. Stubbs, eds., *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 1871), III, p. 589; William A. Chaney, *The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England: The Transition from Paganism to Christianity* (Manchester, 1970), p. 249.

the Saviour of the World...through Whom kings rule and divide the kingdoms of the earth'.⁴⁵⁴ And, again, 'He has given and granted to King Edward the fair island of Britain, as he did of yore to his kinsmen'.⁴⁵⁵

The coronation of Charlemagne, as emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, by Pope Leo III (795-816) on Christmas Day in the year 800 A.D at the Basilica of St Peter in Rome strengthened the interaction between monarchy and church. Setting the imperial crown on Charlemagne's head, the Pope assumed the right to crown Christian sovereigns and, for his part, the emperor assumed the role of protector of the Roman Catholic Church. The special emphasis placed on the coronation ceremony expressed the Church's attempt to endow kingship with certain mystical overtones, which would differentiate the king from all other Christians and define his responsibilities.⁴⁵⁶ The acclamation that followed the coronation ceremony sealed the special relationship between the monarch and God by stressing the divine right of monarchs to rule: 'To Charles, the most pious Augustus, crowned by God, the great and peace-giving Emperor, life and victory'.⁴⁵⁷

However, little is known about the coronation ceremony of the Anglo-Saxon kings. Only King Edgar's delayed and, probably, second coronation at Pentecost in 973, at Bath, is described in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and other

⁴⁵⁴ The grant was given by King Ceolwulf I of Mercia to Archbishop Wulfred at witenagemot on the occasion of the royal consecration, September 17, A. D. 822. See Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum. A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London, 1885-1893), no. 370. See A. W. Haddan and W. Stubbs, eds. *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents* (Oxford, 1871), III, P. 589.

⁴⁵⁵ Agnes J. Robertson, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 194-5, no. 104. Among many, cf. grant by King Æthelstan of Amounderness, June 7, A.D. 934 (Birch 1344), trans. in D. Whitelock, ed., *English Historical Documents*, p. 506: 'I Æthelstan, king of the English, elevated by the right hand of the Almighty, which is Christ, to the throne of the whole kingdom of Britain ...'

⁴⁵⁶ P. L. Ward, 'The Coronation Ceremony in Medieval England', *Speculum* 14 (1939), pp. 160-78.

⁴⁵⁷ R. Sullivan, ed., *The Coronation of Charlemagne: What Did it Signify?* (Boston, 1959), p. 2.

twelfth-century sources whereas there is little reference to King Æthelstan's and King Cnut's coronation. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* has only a single reference to King Cnut's election and acclamation.

In the tenth century, royal ceremonies took place at Kingston-upon-Thames. Æthelstan, Eadred, Æthelred the Unready and, probably, Edward the Elder, Edmund, Eadwig, and Edward the martyr had been consecrated there. It is likely that Edgar had already been consecrated, presumably at Kingston, not long after his succession in 959.⁴⁵⁸ However, his grandiose coronation in 973, on Whit Sunday, took place at Bath, an earlier Roman settlement. It has been suggested that the imperial Roman past and the hot springs at Bath provided an ideal setting for an ostentatious public coronation. After the coronation at Bath, further royal ceremonies were organised at Chester. It seems that the choice of Chester was well thought out: like Bath, Chester had Roman remains and hot springs. It also had the advantage of being the site of an important royal monastery, that of St Werburgh.⁴⁵⁹ A diploma of 958 shows that King Edgar, following the example of his father, King Edmund, made a generous donation to the monastery, which, at the time, had canons and not monks.⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁸ Henry Loyn, *The Governance of Anglo-Saxon England 500-1087* (London, 1984), pp. 84-5.

⁴⁵⁹ The Mercian kings Offa and Ecgrith, in 770s and 790s, and Edgar's father Edmund, in the 940, had all been patrons of the monastery; see C. P. Lewis, 'Edgar, Chester, and the Kingdom of the Mercians, 957-9', in *Edgar, King of the English, 959-975: New Interpretations*, ed. Donald G. Scragg (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 104-23.

⁴⁶⁰ Edgar's donation to the monastery included six estates totalling 17 hides west of Cheshire; see Lewis, 'Edgar, Chester, and the Kingdom of the Mercians, 957-9' pp. 104-23.

An account of the actual proceedings of the coronation ceremony at Bath is given in *Vita Sancti Oswaldi*.⁴⁶¹ The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* also refers to the coronation and its following ceremonies at Chester:

This year Edgar the etheling was consecrated king at Bath, on Pentecost's mass-day, on the 5th before the Ides of May, the thirteenth year since he had obtained the kingdom; and he was then one less than thirty years old. And soon after that, the king led all his ship-forces to Chester; and there came to meet him six kings, and they all plighted their troth to him, that they would be his fellow-workers by sea and by land.⁴⁶²

The royal consecration at Bath was followed by subsequent ceremonies on the River Dee, near Chester.⁴⁶³ In an amazing display of royal power, eight 'sub-kings' rowed King Edgar along the river, including five Scots and Welsh and two sea-kings of the western and northern isles.⁴⁶⁴ Florence of Worcester offers an

⁴⁶¹ Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *Vita Sancti Oswaldi*, in *Historians of the Church of York and its Archbishops*, ed. J. C. Raine, RS, i. (London, 1879), pp. 436-8.

⁴⁶² The ASC (A) 973 also marks the sumptuous coronation with a poem: 'Here was Edgar, ruler of Angles, in full assembly, hallowed king, at the old city Akemanscester; but it the islanders, beorns, by another word, name Bath. There was much bliss on that blessed day to all occasioned, which children of men name and call Pentecost's day. There was a heap of priests; of monks a large band, as I have heard, of sage ones, gathered: and then ago was ten hundred years, told in numbers, from the birth-tide of the glorious King, Pastor of light, but that there remaining then still was, a yearly-tale, as writings say, seven and twenty: so nigh had the Victor-lord a thousand run out when this befell. And himself, Edmund's offspring, had nine and twenty, guardian 'gainst evil works, years in the world when this was done, and then in the thirtieth, was hallowed ruler.' See J. A. Giles, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, p. 83.

⁴⁶³ The ASC D (E). See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, pp. 207-208; See also extract G. from the 'Life of St. Swithun' in Ælfric's *Saints Lives*, in *EHD*, p. 853.

⁴⁶⁴ Ælfric's, *Lives of Saints*. Ed and trans., W. W. Skeat, EETS OS 76, 82 (London, 1881-1900; repr., in 1966), 440-470; Dorothy Whitelock, ed. and trans., 'Extracts from the Old English

anecdotal account, describing Edgar at the helm and the other kings, Cumbrians, Scots, Viking Lords of the Isles and Welsh, rowing on the Dee from the royal palace to St John's church. He also reports that Edgar himself reasoned that all his successors would be proud to be king of the English with so many kings under his rule.⁴⁶⁵

Edgar's coronation at Bath, together with the ritual at Chester, was a magnificently orchestrated demonstration of royal power sanctioned by God. The choice of Bath, the public character of the ceremony, and the extravagant ritual at Chester, all show that Edgar's second coronation was intended to be as different, 'unusual', and grand as his image in the New Minster Charter. It also suggests that the Bath coronation was intended to be a public display of absolute power on a scale that none of his predecessors had ever experienced and, as Florence of Worcester testifies, to make all his successors proud to be kings of the English.

The coronation of 973 is considered as a 'delayed' one, since the king had already reached the age of thirty. It has been suggested that Edgar had intentionally postponed his coronation so that his age at the time of his anointing in 973 would agree with that of the ordination of a priest, namely, not before the age of thirty.⁴⁶⁶ The account of the coronation in *Vita Sancti Oswaldi* shows that the essence of the ceremony was not so much the crowning as the anointing, which in effect set the king apart from the rest of the Christianity.

works of Abbot Ælfric', in *English Historical Documents, c.500-1042* (London, 1955), p. 853; Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 369.

⁴⁶⁵ See Florence of Worcester, *Florentii Wigorniensis Monachi Chronicon ex Chronicis*, ed. B. Thorpe, 2 vols (London, 1848-49).

⁴⁶⁶ Dunstan and Frankish ecclesiastics shared the belief that there was a parallel between the anointing of a king and the consecration of a priest.

Following the second *ordo*, the coronation ceremony particularly emphasised the anointing of the king, which set him apart from the other people.⁴⁶⁷ The anointing ritual symbolised that the king's authority originated directly from God and that the earthly king had the divine right to rule his subjects; as Janet Nelson notes, 'to consecrate was to assert a society's identity.' In the prayer of the *ordo*, the hereditary right of the West Saxon kings to rule Britain was emphasised as follows: 'Stand and hold fast now the position that you have held up to this time by your father's suggestion, and which is delegated to you by hereditary right'.⁴⁶⁸ The corona as part of the coronation liturgy is first mentioned in the *ordo* for the coronation at Bath.⁴⁶⁹

The coronation of 973 on the one hand may have been designed to strengthen the parallels between the anointing of a king and a priest. On the other hand, it would seem that the ostentatious public ceremony was conceived as a celebration, a grandiose finale to the king's successful monastic and monetary reforms, and something that would also agree with his political aspirations and his flamboyant personality. What is more, the imperial connotations of the Bath coronation speak of the king's fondness for display and grandeur, which are not out of character at all with his flamboyant image and the lavish use of gold in the prefatory miniature in the New Minster Charter.

⁴⁶⁷ It has been argued that King Æthelstan was anointed with the 'Second *ordo*' that was used for the first time. Copies of the 'Second *ordo*' feature in several pontificals written in England in the late tenth and early eleventh century; see Christopher Hohler, 'Some Service Books of the Later Saxon Church' in *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. D. Parsons (Chicester, 1975), pp. 60-83. It is very likely that from 900 the same basic rite, the so-called Second Anglo-Saxon *Ordo*, was in use until the Conquest. See Janet Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1977), p. 299.

⁴⁶⁸ Paul Ward, 'An Early Version of the Anglo-Saxon Coronation Ceremony', *English Historical Review* (1942), pp. 345-61.

⁴⁶⁹ T. Arnold, ed., *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia. Historia Regum*, RS, vol. lxxv: 2 (London, 1885), pp. 57-59, 68.

2.3 'Vivat Rex in Eternum!'⁴⁷⁰

'Jesus answered him, "you would have no power over me at all if it had not been given to you from above."' ⁴⁷¹ Jesus's response to Pilate provides the justification for the central theory of government in the Middle Ages which proclaims that the ruler's power descends from God. As Paul states in the New Testament: 'but by the grace of the Lord I am what I am'. ⁴⁷² The concept of the divine origin of kingship, *Rex Dei Gratia*, is also stressed in Wisdom: 'For power is given to you by the Lord', and in Proverbs 'by me kings reign'. ⁴⁷³

In the Carolingian, Ottonian and Anglo-Saxon periods, the Old Testament kings, especially King David and King Solomon, stood as models of kingship. The crown of the Emperor Otto I (936-73) was embellished with enamel portraits of King David and King Solomon. ⁴⁷⁴ Claus Kauffman stresses that the Bible justified the close relationship between the earthly sovereign and divinity in the Ottonian period. ⁴⁷⁵

In Carolingian, Anglo-Saxon, Ottonian and Byzantine art, the ruler is often depicted crowned by God or by the Hand of God, the Virgin Mary, saints or angels. In a fragment of a Sacramentary from Metz, c.869 (Paris, Bibliothèque

⁴⁷⁰ *Unxerunt Salomonem Sadoch Sacerdos et Nathan propheta regem in Gion; et accedentes dixerunt vivat rex in eternum!* (Zadoc the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed Solomon king in Zion; and approaching him they said, May the king live forever). See see Derek H. Turner, ed., *The Claudius Pontificals*, p. 91.

⁴⁷¹ John 19:11.

⁴⁷² Paul in Corinthians 15:10.

⁴⁷³ Wisdom 6:4; Proverbs 8:15.

⁴⁷⁴ Percy E. Scramm, *Neum Generationem: Dreihundert Jahre deutscher 'Kulturgeschichte' im Lichte der Schicksale einer Hamburger Bürgerfamilie 1648-1948* (Göttingen, 1963), p. 237f.

⁴⁷⁵ Claus M. Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550* (London, 2003), pp. 191-193.

Nationale, MS lat. 1141, fol. 2v) Charles the Bald, haloed, standing between Saints Gelasius and Gregory, is crowned by the Hand of God (fig. 111). The image of Emperor Otto III in the Aachen Gospels, written in Reichenau, c.996 (Aachen Cathedral, Aachen Gospels, fol. 16) is based on the iconography of Christ in Majesty and suggests a Christ-centred kingship. Against a golden background, surrounded by the symbols of the Evangelists, Otto III in majesty in a mandorla holding the crossed orb in his right hand is crowned by the Hand of God (fig. 107). In the Bamberg Apocalypse, c.1001-2, Otto III (Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, MS Bibl. 140, fol. 59v) seated in Majesty and holding a long staff in his left hand and the orb with a cross encircled in his right hand, is crowned by Saints Peter and Paul (fig. 108).

The coronation scene depicted in the *Crowning of Emperor Henry II by Christ in Majesty* in the Sacramentary of Henry II, written in Regensburg, c.1002-14 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4456, fol. 11) shows that royal power derives directly from God (fig. 112). The emperor, Henry II, much bigger than the other figures, stands in the middle of the composition having a jewelled crown set on his head by Christ in Majesty who sits in a mandorla above. The jewelled crown on the emperor's head echoes the psalmist's words (Ps. 21): 'thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones . . . For the king hopeth in the Lord: and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.' Henry II holds a lance in his left hand and he turns his head to the angel on the top right who invests him with a sword while the angel on the top left approaches the emperor holding a veil, like the one held by the angel over Queen Emma in *Liber Vitae*. On the right St Udalrich and on the left St Emmeran support the emperor's raised hands. In the Old English Hexateuch, Moses is depicted having his raised arms supported by Aaron.

The Benedictional of Æthelwold, written in Winchester c.971-984 (BL, MS Additional 49598) provides an outstanding example of royal iconography, particularly in the development of the image of the Anglo-Saxon queen though the strong presence of the Mary Virgin. The Bayeux Tapestry too proves a valuable source of information for the iconography of kingship and coronation. A scene in the late eleventh-century Bayeux Tapestry, produced in England, (Normandy, Bayeux, Musée de la Tapisserie de Bayeux) shows, on the day that King Edward the Confessor died, on the fifth of January 1066, two noblemen approaching Harold and offering him the crown and axe, symbols of royal authority (fig. 59). The scene with the coronation of Harold on the sixth of January 1066 shows the king enthroned with a fleur-de-lis crown on his head and a cloak around his shoulders, fastened with a brooch. He holds a crossed orb in his right hand and a long staff, with a cross on the top and fleur-de-lis decoration, in his left hand. On the left of the king, Archbishop Stigand, tonsured, stands frontally, with raised arms. On the right one of the two nobles carries a long sword for the king (fig. 58)

King Edward the Confessor is depicted on his forged seal (British Library) (fig. 196) and the *Sovereign/Martlets* issue of his coinage, c.1056-59 (Asmolean Museum) enthroned with orb and sceptre (fig. 199).⁴⁷⁶ Both the coin and the seal show 'imperial' influence; the Sovereign issue is an imitation of a coin of Justinian's cousin and successor, Justin II and the obverse reflects the iconography of German imperial seals of the eleventh century.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁶ The coin is from the Asmolean Museum. The forged seal is from the British Library.

⁴⁷⁷ The seal is a copy of the genuine seal of the Confessor, the oldest version of the great seal known. The matrix from which these impressions, obverse and reverse, were taken, was made by a forger of genius working at Westminster Abbey in the mid-twelfth century. His seals were used for forging charters of a number of religious houses See R.H.M. Dolley and F.E. Jones, *Anglo-Saxon Coins* (London, 1961), pp. 215ff.

Some of the Psalms present verses suitable for coronation rites and royal iconography with references to the divine origin of kingship (Psalm 21 2:3): 'For thou dost meet him with the blessings of goodness; thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.' And (Psalm 21 2:7): 'For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved. God's sanction to the ruler is generously expressed with the offering of a gold crown.

Psalm 110 shows that when God supports the king, the king knows no fear and no enemies (*Douay-Rheims Bible*, Psalm 110:1): 'The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand: Until I make thy enemies thy footstool'. And it continues (*ibid*, Psalm 110:2): 'The Lord will send forth the sceptre of thy power out of Sion: rule thou in the midst of thy enemies. Further down there is a reference to the relation between kingship and priesthood (*Ibid*, Psalm 110:4.): 'Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech.⁴⁷⁸ So the Lord would be king and priest at the same time'.⁴⁷⁹

In the Old Testament priests and kings were anointed when appointed into office, and after that they were called the anointed of the Lord, since their office and they themselves were sacred to God.⁴⁸⁰ When the Ark had been brought to Jerusalem, King David undertook the organization of religious worship. It was then that King David assumed, under his kingship, the offices of a priest and a judge. Jewish translations relate the term to King David—a 'righteous king' who, as king, had certain priest-like sacrificial responsibilities. As a member of the tribe of Judah, King David was not a priest. In Judaism, only members of the tribe of

⁴⁷⁸ Douay-Rheims Bible, Ps 110:4. Melchizedek was King of Salem and priest of God (Gen 14:18).

⁴⁷⁹ Isa 53:2, 11:1; Jer 23:5; 33:15; Ro 15:12. It is emphasized that the Messiah would rule on his throne and be a priest on his throne.

⁴⁸⁰ Aaron and his sons were anointed as priests. Also described is the anointing of the garments of the priests and materials used in the ceremony.

Levi, who descended from Aaron, the brother of Moses, were entitled to an eternal priesthood.

In Psalm 150, a parallel is drawn between a king and a judge: 'Thou shalt rule them with rod of iron, and shalt break them in pieces like a potter's vessel'. And it continues: 'And now, O ye kings, understand: receive instruction, you that judge the earth.' King David had also exercised the office of judge, though Levites were later appointed for this purpose, as well as other minor officials.

It has been established that, originally, the early German Kings had three main functions: to serve as judges during popular assemblies, to serve as priests during sacrifices and to serve as military leaders during wars. Bede and Alcuin expressed similar views on the role of the Christian king: he was not only *doctor* and *Praedicator* but also had political and military responsibilities. Moreover, the king was responsible for leading his people to salvation.⁴⁸¹ In the *Liber Vitae*, King Cnut visually expresses these views by holding his sword and placing the golden cross on the altar in front of the monks.

2.3.1 Coronation ceremony

As Kauffmann points out that 'the anointing of Old Testament kings set the model for medieval coronations and accordingly both the Bible and the medieval coronation ceremonies influenced the depiction of biblical cycles.'⁴⁸²

The prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter depicts King Edgar as an *Alter Christus*. Catherine Karkov stresses that the image of a Christ-like ruler,

⁴⁸¹ B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors eds, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History* (Oxford, 1969), III, p. 132. See also C. Plummer, *Venerabilis Baede Opera Historica*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1892 and 1896), vol. I, p. 412.

⁴⁸² Claus Kauffman, 'The Political Use of Bible', in *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1550* (London, 2003), p. 193.

established by Alfred the Great, promotes the Christological aspect of Anglo-Saxon kingship.⁴⁸³ In the New Minster Charter, Edgar, holding his charter, turns with raised arms towards Christ in Majesty above. Although flanked by the Virgin Mary and Saint Peter, King Edgar is larger in size. This is reminiscent of Henry II who, flanked on the right by St Udalrich and on the left by St. Emmeran in the *Crowning of Henry II by Christ*, is also represented as being larger than the sacred figures (fig. 112). In both cases, the rulers are depicted in a very prestigious and exclusive position, all alone among the divine authorities.

A poem in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives an account of King Edgar's coronation during the great meeting of the witan and among the great assembly of priests and monks, at Pentecost, on Whit Sunday on the eleventh of May, in 973 at Bath.⁴⁸⁴ As has been said, King Edgar was consecrated king fourteen years after his ascension to the throne in a grandiose ceremony performed by Saint Dunstan of Canterbury and Saint Oswald of York. Edgar was at the age of thirty, the canonical age at which a man might be consecrated bishop and at the height of his power, when he was anointed and crowned.⁴⁸⁵ The close similarities between the consecration of a bishop and the anointing of King Edgar, described by Byrhtferth, are mentioned in Adrienne Jones, who also reminds us that, in 973, Edgar will have been about thirty years old, the canonical age for the consecration of a bishop.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸³ Catherine Karkov, 'Edgar and the Royal Women of the Monastic Reform', in *The Ruler Portrait of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 84-118.

⁴⁸⁴ See Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *EHD*, pp. 76-7.

⁴⁸⁵ Christopher Brooke, 'On King-Making', in *The Saxon and Norman Kings*, (London, 1963), pp. 28-57.

⁴⁸⁶ Adrienne Jones, 'The Significance of the Regal Consecration of Edgar', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 33 (3) (1982), esp. pp. 386-9.

Æswig, who was abbot of Bath in 973, had led King Edgar's embassy to the German emperor Otto I in the preceding year.⁴⁸⁷ Michael Lapidge suggests the possibility that Æswig's experience of German rituals and traditions initiated the idea that King Edgar could be anointed as a king fourteen years after his ascension to the throne.⁴⁸⁸ Bouman and Nelson point out that during the ninth century the inauguration rituals instituted by Frankish and German ecclesiastics permitted a separated ritual for anointing and coronation.⁴⁸⁹ However, as it has been mentioned above, the Old Testament already provides the model of double anointing, with King David and King Solomon being anointed twice. Interestingly enough their second anointing, as in the case of King Edgar, was a public one.⁴⁹⁰ King Solomon became king at the age of eighteen.⁴⁹¹ When King David ascended to the throne he was thirty years old like King Edgar. David was endowed with the qualities of psalmist and prophet. Biblical passages emphasise his musical skills and poetic talent.⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁷ Byrhtferth gives the account of Edgar's embassy to Otto I, see Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *Vita S Oswaldi* in *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgbwine* (Oxford, 2009), p. 103, iv 5.

⁴⁸⁸ Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth's *The Life of St Oswald*, notes 52-53, p. 106.

⁴⁸⁹ C. A. Bouman, *Sacring and Crowning: The Development of the Latin Ritual for the Anointing of Kings and the Coronation of an Emperor before the eleventh century* (Groningen, 1957), pp. 17-19; Janet Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', in P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood, eds., *Early Medieval Kingship* (Leeds, 1977), esp. pp. 63-70.

⁴⁹⁰ Solomon's second anointing as king: 1 Chr 29:22b: 'And did eat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon, the son of David, king the second time, and anointed him unto the LORD to be prince, and Zadoc to be priest; 1 Chr 29:23: Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David, his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.; 1 Chr 29:24: And all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of David, submitted themselves unto Solomon, the king. 1 Chr 29:25: And the LORD magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel. *David makes Solomon king and assembles Israel*: 1Chr 28:1 23:1.

⁴⁹¹ For the life, reign and character of King Solomon: 1Kings 1-9; 2 Ch 1-9.

⁴⁹² 1 Samuel 16:18; 2 Samuel 1, 3, 22, 23.

In the *Life of St Oswald*, the account of the coronation of King Edgar is presented in detail.⁴⁹³ First, the time is given: 'it was the holy season, in accordance with custom'. Then, the attendants: a mosaic of the Anglo-Saxon nobility of the times, all ealdormen, reeves, judges, archbishops, bishops, abbots, ladies and abbesses, with their charges followed by senior priests and clerics. The great assembly was the result of King Edgar's edict sent all over the realm—for the bishops to bless, anoint and consecrate the king. The royal insignia were then mentioned—the sceptre and the golden-diadem. These preliminary details were followed by the procedure itself: King Edgar 'crowned and chosen' was led to the church by men and abbots 'dressed in snow-white albs and covered with purple', where his thengs and people were waiting for him. Then the coronation ritual began. Two bishops took the king's hands and led him to the church, with everyone singing, in high and modulated voice, the following antiphon: 'Let thy hand be strengthened and thy right hand exalted; justice and judgment are the preparation of thy throne; let mercy and truth go before thy face';⁴⁹⁴ then, 'Glory to be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.'⁴⁹⁵

When they arrived at the church, King Edgar prostrated himself before the altar and Dunstan took the diadem from the king's head and cited the *Te Deum*.⁴⁹⁶ Then the bishops raised the king from the ground and the archbishop asked the king to keep three promises.⁴⁹⁷ The first promise was related to the church, 'the

⁴⁹³ Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *The Life of St Oswald*, pp. 105-11, iv.6 - iv.8.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 109, iv. 7. The antiphon *Firmetur manus tua* is from Ps 88 (89): 14-15.

⁴⁹⁵ Derek H. Turner, ed., *The Claudius Pontificals*, vol. 97 (London, 1971), p. 89; Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *The Life of St Oswald*, p. 109, iv. 7.

⁴⁹⁶ Derek H. Turner, ed., *The Claudius Pontificals* (London, 1971) vol. 97 p. 89: *Te deus laudamus. Te dominum confitemur.*

⁴⁹⁷ Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., *The Life of St Oswald*, p. 109, iv.7: 'I promise in the first instance that the church and the entire Christian populace shall under my authority keep true peace at all

church and the entire Christian populace shall under my authority keep true peace'. So the king, like a priest, would assume an ecclesiastical-spiritual responsibility.

With the second promise, clearly secular and juridical, 'I will proscribe theft and all manner of wickedness', the king seemed to assume the responsibility of a judge. And with the third promise—'I shall enjoy in justice and mercy, so that our kind and merciful God grant His mercy to me and you'—he presented himself as the earthly king, the respectful and loyal representative of the divine king. In effect, the king's promise of justice and mercy is the definition of good government. Justice and mercy, the two key words in the king's third promise, were already heard in the antiphon sang by the congregation, when the king was led to the church by the bishops, as shown above. Thus the coronation oath bound the king with responsibilities similar to the ones found in the office of a priest and a judge.

The coronation ritual continued with the archbishop standing up and reciting prayers for the king.⁴⁹⁸ The anointing of the king, performed by the archbishops Dunstan and Oswald, was followed by another prayer recited by Oswald and the antiphon, *Unxerunt Salomonem Sadoch sacerdos et Nathan propheta regem in Gion*.⁴⁹⁹ Then, approaching Edgar, Dunstan and Oswald said: *Vivat rex in eternum!*⁵⁰⁰ In Byrhtferth's account, after the anointing, Archbishop Dunstan gave

times; I also promise that I will proscribe theft and all manner of wickedness for persons of all stations; and thirdly, that in all judgments I shall enjoy in justice and mercy, so that our kind and merciful God shall grant his His mercy to me and you'; See also Derek Turner, ed., *The Claudius Pontificals* (1971), p. 90.

⁴⁹⁸ Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., *The Life of St Oswald*, p. 91.

⁴⁹⁹ 'Zadoc the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed Solomon king in Zion'.

⁵⁰⁰ Approaching him, they said, 'May the king live forever'. See Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *Vita S. Oswaldi*, iv.7, pp. 109; see Derek H. Turner, ed., *The Claudius*

the king a ring and he then girdled him with a sword. The placing of the crown on Edgar's head was followed with a blessing. The consecration ended with Archbishop Dunstan giving the king the sceptre and the rod.⁵⁰¹ The ritual finished with Dunstan saying the Mass.

The symbolic meaning of the insignia and the order in which they were given to the king are closely related to the promises the king gave to the people and correspond to the order in which the king gave them. First to be given was the ring, representing the king's 'marriage' to the Church and the responsibility for her protection as part of his king-priest role, according to his first promise 'the church and the entire Christian populace shall under my authority keep true peace'. Second to be given was the sword, representing justice and the protection of justice by the king as part of his king-judge role, according to his second promise 'I will proscribe theft and all manner of wickedness.'⁵⁰² Third to be given was the crown, followed by the rod and the sceptre, representing kingship on earth, as part of his earthy-king role as representative of the divine king, according to his third promise 'I shall enjoy in justice and mercy, so that our kind and merciful God grant His mercy to me and you'.⁵⁰³ The sceptre, symbol of kingship, is related to the rod, symbol of leadership, in the Bible, carried by patriarchs and judges in the Old Testament as well as by New Testament figures such as the Good Shepherd.

Pontificals, p. 91: *Vicexerunt Salomonem Sadoch sacerdos et Nathan propheta regem in Gion; et accedentes dixerunt Vivat rex in eternum!*; Kings I: 45: *Viuat rex in eternum*.

⁵⁰¹ Lapidge suggests that the blessing is the *benedictio ad regem*, inc. *Extendat omnipotens Dominus dexteram suae benedictionis*, in *The Claudius Pontificals*, ed. Turner, p. 93. See Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., *The Life of St Oswald*, no 67.

⁵⁰² Michael Lapidge, *The Life of St Oswald*, pp. 105-111.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*

Byrthtferth parallels the procedures and celebrations of the people at Edgar's coronation with those at King Solomon's consecration in the Old Testament: 'all things were properly done after the manner of wise King Solomon, whereby everyone drank in accordance with his age and his capacity.'⁵⁰⁴ Byrthtferth closes the account with the image of King Edgar 'crowned in laurel and decorated in roseate splendour', seated with Dunstan and Oswald. The description is reminiscent of the prefatory miniature in the *Regularis Concordia* (BL, MS Cotton Tiberius A. iii, fol. 2v) where King Edgar, with a sumptuous crown on his head, is seated between Dunstan and Æthelwold, holding together a long, blank scroll with both hands (fig. 37).

2.3.2 Anointing

Kauffmann stressed the importance of anointing in Old Testament kingship, drawing attention to how political propaganda in the Middle Ages made use of it as a major feature in Western coronation ceremonies, to the point that the practice of anointing became inseparable from the medieval notion of kingship in Europe.⁵⁰⁵ Anointing a king was equivalent to crowning him in terms of authority, without a crown being required.⁵⁰⁶

King David and King Solomon were anointed twice. At the end of his reign, King David had Solomon publicly anointed to make sure that he would succeed to the throne.⁵⁰⁷ The practice of the successor king being anointed during his father's

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p.111, iv. 8

⁵⁰⁵ Claus M. Kauffman, 'The Political Use of Bible', in *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England, 700-1500* (London, 2003) pp. 193.

⁵⁰⁶ 1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Samuel 2:4.

⁵⁰⁷ Solomon's second anointing as king: 1 Chr 29:22b: 'And did eat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon, the son of David, king the second time, and anointed him unto the LORD to be prince, and Zadoc to be priest'; 1 Chr 29:23: 'Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David, his father, and prospered; and all Israel

reign was revived in Carolingian times and copied in Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. In 781, for instance, Charlemagne sent his two sons, Peppin and Louis, to be anointed by the pope. The Mercian King Offa seemed to have borrowed the Carolingian idea when he conceived the plan to crown his son Ecgrith during his own lifetime.⁵⁰⁸ In both cases, the anointing would legitimize a new dynasty and protect the expanded kingdoms.

Since Justinian I, the Byzantine emperors believed that they were anointed by God. It is only in the twelfth century that the emperor was anointed by the patriarch of Constantinople.⁵⁰⁹ In the West, in 493, when the Frankish King Clovis I adopted the Christian faith, the French kings adopted the *fleur-de-lis* as a baptismal symbol of purity. According to legend, Clovis was anointed by a vial of oil that miraculously descended from Heaven.

The Merovingian monarchy was the first to anoint a king. In 754, Pope Stephen II anointed Pippin III, the first king of the Carolingian dynasty, king of the Franks.⁵¹⁰ The anointing was performed with holy oil and with chrism, the same as

obeyed him'; 1 Chr 29:24: 'And all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of David, submitted themselves unto Solomon, the king'. 1 Chr 29:25: 'And the LORD magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel. David makes Solomon king and assembles Israel': 1Chr 28:1, 23:1.

⁵⁰⁸ See Nicholas Brooks, 'Mercian and West Saxon Overlordship', in *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 117-20; In 787, Offa managed to obtain the papal support and secure the anointing of his son Ecgrith since Pope Hadrian sent a *pallium* to Bishop Hygeberht. With the elevation of Hygeberht, Offa freed himself from Archbishop Jænberht, who was hostile to his plans. See ASC 787 says: 'In this year [787] there was a contentious synod at Chelsea, and Archbishop Jænberht lost a certain part of his province, and Hygeberht was chosen by King Offa, and Ecgrith was consecrated king'. See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, (London, 1955), p. 166

⁵⁰⁹ Claus M. Kauffman, 'The Political Use of Bible', in *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England* (London, 2003), p. 194.

⁵¹⁰ For an outline of the historical circumstances, see J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Barbarian West 400-1000* (London 1952), p. 96f.

in the ordination of priests and bishops. This can explain the sacramental overtones applied to the coronation of a king.⁵¹¹

During the ninth century, the Church assumed the right to anoint Carolingian kings and present them with royal insignia. In 800, Charlemagne was anointed and crowned by Pope Leo III in Rome. The first recorded anointing of an English king was in 787. By the tenth century, as in the coronation of King Edgar in 973, the archbishops of Canterbury and York directed the ceremony, with the archbishop of Canterbury assuming the leading role.⁵¹²

In various biblical verses, the promised Messiah is referred as the 'anointed one'.⁵¹³ The word 'Christ' derives from the Greek *Christos*, meaning 'anointed', and the Greek version of Jesus title 'the Messiah'. Referring to Christ to his anointing by God, Christ said 'The spirit of the Lord is on me, because he anointed me to preach good news to the poor'.⁵¹⁴ Paul, also referring to God anointing him and his companions, Timothy and Silas, said 'He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.'⁵¹⁵

⁵¹¹ Nicholas Brooks argued that '[s]ome kind of anointing may have been known among the Celtic leaders of Ireland and Wales before the days of Offa. See Nicholas Brooks, 'Mercian and West Saxon Overlordship', in *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 117-20.

⁵¹² R. W. Lightbown, 'The Origin of the Coronation Ceremony', in the *Crown Jewels*, ed. J. Blair (London, 1998), esp. pp. 10-17 and 54-56. See also, P. E. Schramm, *A History of the English Coronation*, trans., L. G. Wickam Legg (Oxford, 1937), pp. 18-20 and 40-42.

⁵¹³ Ps 2:2; Dan. 9:25.

⁵¹⁴ Lk 4:18; Acts 10:38: 'How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.'

⁵¹⁵ 2 Co 1:21-22: 'He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.'

The first time that the act of anointing appears in the Old Testament is when God commanded Moses to anoint Aaron.⁵¹⁶ Among the Hebrews, the act of anointing was significant in the consecration of a person or object for sacred use. In Leviticus and in the Psalms, the high priest and the king are both sometimes called 'the anointed'.⁵¹⁷ In Genesis, God identifies himself to Jacob by reminding him of the sacred pillar that Jacob anointed at Bethel.⁵¹⁸ In Exodus and Leviticus, there is an account of Moses anointing the sacred altar and the entire Tabernacle and all its furnishings and utensils, with scented oil.⁵¹⁹ In Leviticus Moses anoints Aaron and his sons as priests.⁵²⁰ A miniature in the Old English Hexateuch (Cotton MS Claudius, B. iv, fol. 107v) depicts the *Consecration of Aaron and his sons*.⁵²¹ In Kings and Chronicles, there are accounts of prophets being anointed.⁵²² In Leviticus, the anointing of the high priest conveyed a particular holiness upon him, which he had to be extremely careful not to sully: 'He must not make himself

⁵¹⁶ Ex 29:7.

⁵¹⁷ Lev 4:3, 4:16; 6:20; Ps 132:10

⁵¹⁸ Gen 31:13 'I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me'.

⁵¹⁹ Ex 40; Lv 8.

⁵²⁰ Lv 8:12: 'And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.; Lev.8:30: And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, an upon his sons' garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him'.

⁵²¹ The Old English Hexateuch, BL, Cotton Claudius B.iv, fol. 107v. The consecration of Aaron and his sons: (above) they are washed and Aaron is anointed (centre), the calf is taken, Aaron and his sons lay their hands on its head, the altar is sanctified and blood is poured around its base; and (below) Moses touches the thumb of Aaron's right hand with blood and (right) pours the blood over the altar.

⁵²² 1Kings 19:16. God asks Elijah to anoint the following people (1Kings 19:15): 'And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus; and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria'; 1 Kings 19:16: 'And Jehu, the son of Nimshi, shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel. And Elisha, the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy stead'; 1 Chr 16:22; Ps 105:15.

unclean, even for his father or mother, nor leave the sanctuary of his God or desecrate it, because he has been dedicated by the anointing oil of his God'.⁵²³

The two renowned Old Testament kings, David and Solomon, both endowed with special qualities by God, stand as the prefiguration of Christ in the New Testament. King David was aware that he was endowed by God with the qualities of psalmist and prophet when he said 'The spirit of the Lord hath spoken by me and his word by my tongue'.⁵²⁴ On the other hand, King David's son, King Solomon was endowed by God with the qualities of a wise and merciful judge. King Solomon became king at the age of eighteen and his name in Hebrew means 'peaceful' and was also called *Jedidiah*, i.e., 'beloved of Yahweh'.⁵²⁵ There are a lot of parallels drawn between King Solomon and King Edgar in Anglo-Saxon writings, not least that the latter is also known as 'Peaceful'.⁵²⁶

Like his father David, King Solomon reigned for forty years. He devoted himself to the internal organization of the kingdom, keeping peaceful relations with other countries. King Edgar followed the same policy. He worked diligently to reinforce the internal organization of the realm—with his monastic and coinage reforms—and he kept the country away from military expeditions. Solomon's wisdom relates him with the office of a judge. In the Old Testament, the position of a judge is more one of unelected non-hereditary leadership. The judges were the ones chosen by God to rescue the people. So, in times of trial, they acted primarily as military leaders. After the threat had passed, the judges were generally expected to give up their position as military leaders.

⁵²³ Lv 21:11-12: 'He must not make himself unclean, even for his father or mother, nor leave the sanctuary of his God or desecrate it, because he has been dedicated by the anointing oil of his God'.

⁵²⁴ 2 Samuel 23:2.

⁵²⁵ For the life, reign and character of King Solomon: 1Kings 1-9; 2 Ch 1-9.

⁵²⁶ Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., 'On the Dedication of a Church', in *The Homilies of Ælfric*, 2 vols (London, 1844-6), vol. 2, pp. 575-585.

In a Byzantine *Anastasis* mosaic from the early eleventh century in *Hosios Lucas* near Delphi, Greece, King David and King Solomon stand beside Christ, against a golden background.⁵²⁷ Christ descends into limbo and saves Adam and Eve, on the right, and David and Solomon, on the left. Episodes in the lives of David and Solomon were considered by the Fathers as foreshadowing the life of Christ: for instance, Bethlehem is the birthplace of both David and Christ; David, the shepherd boy, points out Christ, the relationship expressed in the New Testament with God the Father and Christ his Son. In the prefatory miniature in the New Minster Charter, King Edgar, as *Alter Christus*, raises his arms towards God the Father above him. The same can be said for King Æthelstan, who standing so close to St Cuthbert, hints similarly at an intimate close relationship of a father with his son.

King David

In medieval manuscript illumination King David is usually depicted as a talented musician and author of the psalms.⁵²⁸ In an eighth century Carolingian ivory cover for the Psalter of Dagulf, made for Pope Adrian in the palace workshops of Emperor Charlemagne (Paris, Louvre. Dpt. Des Objects d'Art) David orders the psalms to be written down and then sung, while the last scene portrays St Jerome receiving the Pope's orders to edit the psalms. In the Vivian Bible (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 1, fol. 215v) David, bearded and crowned, is dancing and playing his harp (fig. 48). In the Vespasian Psalter, written in Canterbury in second quarter of the eighth century (BL, Cotton MS

⁵²⁷ John Lowden, 'Sacred Spaces', in *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (London, 1997), pp. 227-270, pl. 137.

⁵²⁸ His skill in music and his poetic talent are repeatedly mentioned in the Old Testament, 1 Samuel 16:18; 2 Samuel 1, 3, 22, 23.

Vespasian A. i, fol. 30v) David, haloed and clean-shaven, is portrayed seated on his throne and playing his harp accompanied by his scribes and his musicians (fig. 47).

David, this time bearded and wearing long robes, is playing the harp, surrounded by his four musicians, Asaph, Eman, Ethan and Itithun, in an outline drawing of an Anglo-Saxon psalter, dated from the second half of the eleventh century (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff. I. 23, fol. 4v) (fig. 49). Crowned and dressed as an Anglo-Saxon king, he is depicted playing the harp in an outline drawing of the *Portiforium Sancti Wulfstani*, c.1064-1093 (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 391, fol. 24v) (fig. 50).

In the prefatory miniature of the Utrecht Psalter, produced in c.800 at Rheims (Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, MS Bibl. Rhenotraiectinae I Nr 32, psalm 1, f. 1v) King David is depicted as the author of the psalms seated under a canopy and composing his sacred songs.⁵²⁹ A very similar iconography is repeated in the Halley Psalter (BL, Harley MS 603, fol. 1v).⁵³⁰ The scene seems to have been inspired by evangelist models. Similarly, in an outline drawing from the *Lives of St Paul the Hermit and St Guthlac*, probably written in Canterbury, c.1070 (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 389, fol. iv) St Jerome is depicted writing, seated under a canopy, the dove next to his ear representing divine inspiration (fig. 45). A dove is also depicted next to King David's ear in an outline drawing of an Anglo-Saxon psalter, dated from the second half of eleventh century (Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff. I. 23, fol. 4v) (fig. 49).

⁵²⁹ See William Noel, 'The Utrecht Psalter in England: Continuity and Experiment', in *The Utrecht Psalter in Medieval Art: Picturing the Psalms of David*, eds., Koert van der Horst, William Noel, Wilhelmina C. M. Wüstefeld, (Utrecht, 1996), fig. 27: Utrecht Psalter, psalm 1, f. 1v.

⁵³⁰ http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=Harley_ms_603_fs001r

In the Old Testament (I Sam. 10:1) there is the account of the anointing of the first king of Israel, Saul, by Samuel the prophet, and the account of the anointing of David by Samuel and the men of Judah and Israel (II Samuel 2:4; II Samuel 5:3).⁵³¹ Samuel, the Prophet and the last of the Judges, was sent by God to anoint David in place of Saul, whom God had rejected for his disobedience. A fresco in Dura Europos, in Syria, dated from the third century A.D., shows David, beardless and very young-looking, being anointed by Samuel (fig. 147).

Solomon, the son of King David, born after David's repentance, was chosen to be the future king in preference to his older brothers. To make sure that Solomon would succeed to the throne, David publicly anointed him. In Kings (I Kings 1:30-40) and Chronicles (I Chronicles 29:22), King Solomon is anointed by Zadok the priest and Nathan the Prophet.⁵³² In the frontispiece to Proverbs in the Bible of San Paolo fuori le Mura (MS Lat. 1, fol. 188 (clxxxv)v), King Solomon enthroned under a majestic canopy and with a sumptuous crown on his head, is surrounded by soldiers. At the top right of the composition Solomon is depicted standing and being anointed by Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet (fig. 96).

⁵³¹ Saul privately anointed the king (I Sam. 10:1): 'Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his heritage?'; I Samuel 16:13: 'Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah'; II Samuel 2:4, II Samuel 5:3.

⁵³² R. W. Lightbown, 'The Origin of the Coronation Ceremony', in *The Crown Jewels*, ed. C. Blair (London, 1988), pp. 5-20; Carra Fergusson-O'Meara, *Monarchy and Consent: The Coronation Book of Charles V of France* (London, 2001).

2.4 'By Imitation and not by Nature'⁵³³

Kingship is not granted unconditionally by God but it undergoes His scrupulous and steady supervision. The king's right to rule depends exclusively on God's mercy. Saul, the first king in the Old Testament stands as an example of bad kingship, which was doomed to fail. So kingship is granted under rigorous divine supervision.

Deuteronomy provides the rules for a harmonious relationship between a king and his people.⁵³⁴ The people should set over them a king 'whom the Lord thy God shall choose' (Deut. 17:14-20). The king should not be a foreigner but 'one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over-thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not any brother'. Then the king is advised to write a copy of this law and read it always and share it with the priests and Levites. So with the rewriting and the constant reading of the law the king 'may learn to fear the LORD, his God,' and when the king has paid respect to God and his commandments only then the king may 'prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.'

⁵³³ Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., 'The Fifth Sunday in Lent', in *The Homilies of Ælfric*, vol. II, pp. 227-229.

⁵³⁴ Deut 17:14-20: 'When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all nations that are about me; Thou shalt in any wise set himking over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not any brother. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of what which is before the priests and Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this Law and the statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.'

Psalm 110 shows that when God supports the king, the king knows no fear and no enemies 'The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand: Until I make thy enemies thy footstool'.⁵³⁵ And it continues: 'The Lord will send forth the sceptre of thy power out of Sion: rule thou in the midst of thy enemies (Psalm 110:2). Further down there is a reference to the relation between kingship and priesthood: 'Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech (Psalm 110:4).⁵³⁶ So the Lord would be king and priest at the same time.⁵³⁷

King Eadred had no children and so after his death in 955, the West Saxon dynasty survived through his brother Edmund's sons, Edgar and Eadwig. Edgar was no more than twelve years old when his brother, Eadwig succeeded to the throne at the age of fifteen.⁵³⁸ In the *Life of St Dunstan*, King Eadwig is mentioned as a bad king: 'After him succeeded Eadwig, the son of King Edmund, a youth indeed in age and endowed with little wisdom in government, though, when elected, he ruled in due succession and with royal title over peoples'.⁵³⁹ In 956 the young King Eadwig had a dispute with Dunstan, abbot of Glastonbury, one of the most important ecclesiastical figures of the period. Dunstan was close to the royal family and King Edmund, like King Eadred later, had always been favourable to him.

The conflict between King Eadwig and Dunstan started when the king, soon after his anointing, left the royal feast to entertain himself with a

⁵³⁵ Douay-Rheims Bible, Ps 110:1.

⁵³⁶ Melchizedek was King of Salem and priest of God (Gen 14:18).

⁵³⁷ Isa 53:2, 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Ro 15:12. It is emphasized that the Messiah would rule on his throne and be a priest on his throne.

⁵³⁸ Frank Stenton, 'The Decline of the Old English Monarchy' in *Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1971), p. 364.

⁵³⁹ *EHD* 1, 600-1042, 'The Life of St. Dunstan', p. 900.

noblewoman and her daughter.⁵⁴⁰ The king, with his crown thrown aside, was found in the company of the two ladies by Dunstan and the bishop of Lichfield. Very quickly the prelates led the king back to the assembly. The immediate reaction to the new king's loose behaviour came from orders directly from the Church. Clearly, King Eadwig did not forget the rebuke and the humiliation, as soon after the incident Dunstan lost his property and was sent in exile.⁵⁴¹ Only after the death of King Eadwig did Dunstan returned from exile, at King Edgar's invitation, and later he was consecrated bishop.

Similarly, in the Old Testament, Samuel the prophet warned King Saul of the consequences of his transgressions and, later, rebuked King David for his actions.⁵⁴² Evidently in both cases the immediate reaction against the monarch's loose behaviour came from the clergy. Like King Saul in the Old Testament, King Eadwig was associated with bad kingship 'endowed with little wisdom in government'. According to his earliest biographer the king was lacking in wisdom and his choice of advisers was rather poor.⁵⁴³

⁵⁴⁰ W. Stubbs, ed., *Memorials of Saint Dunstan*, RS 63 (London, 1874), pp. 32-4.

⁵⁴¹ In the *Liber Vitae* of New Minster, Ælfgifu, wife of King Eadwig, appears in a list of 'illustrious women, choosing the holy place for the love of God, who have commended themselves to the prayers of the community by the gift of alms'. The fact that King Eadwig married Ælfgifu, the daughter of the above-mentioned noblewoman, involved in the 956 scandal, was probably one of the reasons that contributed to Dunstan's exile. See W. de G. Birch, ed., *Liber Vitae* (London, 1892), p. 57; See W. de G. Birch, ed., *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon Histor* (London, 1885-99): A charter in 972 is attested by Ælfgifu, the king's wife, Æthelgifu, mother of the wife of the king, and the bishops of Winchester, Ramsbury and Worcester; ASC (D) states that Archbishop Oda separated Eadwig and Ælfgifu because they were nearly akin.

⁵⁴² 1 Samuel 10:1-3: And Samuel the prophet tried to advise Saul: Samuel 15: 22-23 'And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as witchcraft; and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king'.

⁵⁴³ Frank Stenton, 'The Decline of the English Monarchy', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 364-7.

King Eadwig's harsh punishment of Dunstan is an example of the king's poor judgment and bad government. This contrasts sharply with the behaviour of King Edgar, who rewarded the prelate, thus showing his wisdom and good government.

The Roman *Damnatio memoriae* of bad emperors continued in Christian period in the form of *memoria*.⁵⁴⁴ This enabled the Church to control the king's behaviour through his *memoria*, rewarding good kingship with writings full of praise and rebuking bad kingship with negative writing. In this way the Church was able to protect and consolidate its power as God's representative on earth and adviser to the earthly king.

2.4.1 Transgression by imitation and transgression by nature

The juxtaposition of good and bad government is often traced in the Old Testament with examples of good kings, such as Solomon, and bad ones such as Saul. In one of his sermons, Ælfric says that the Israelites, God's favourite people, sinned by 'imitation and not by nature', therefore they were forgiven by God.⁵⁴⁵ With these words, Ælfric introduces two types of transgression: the former is the outcome of thoughtless imitation whereas the latter lies deeper into the human

⁵⁴⁴ *Damnatio memoriae* (damnation of memory) means that a person must not be remembered. It was a form of dishonor and intended to erase someone from history. It was the official condemnation of the memory of a Roman emperor by the Senate. His statues were destroyed, his name obliterated from all public records and his coins would be melted down. It is the opposite of *apotheosis*, which means that a deceased emperor is believed to have ascended to heaven. *Damnatio memoriae* could be passed by the Roman Senate upon traitors or others who brought discredit to the Roman State. Apotheosis and *damnatio memoriae* are still known from the end of the fourth century; Latin definition for *memoria*, *memoriae*: history; memory, recollection; time within memory, remembrance, the discipline of memory and recall (~ *tenere* => to remember).

⁵⁴⁵ Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., 'The Fifth Sunday in Lent, in *The Homilies of Ælfric*, (London, 1844-6), vol. ii, pp. 225-241.

heart, staining and distorting the human nature permanently. This differentiation in the type of human transgression towards God might explain the main difference between a good and a bad king and can also stand as a definition of good and bad kingship.

God forgave King David when he sinned because he did not sin by nature, that is to say, King David repented truly and he did not let his transgression distort his nature and estrange him from God. By contrast, God abandoned King Saul since the origin of his transgression lay in his nature or, rather, the king did not repent, and allowing his transgression to distort his nature; as a consequence, he estranged himself from God permanently.⁵⁴⁶

In this light, King David represents good kingship. He did not sin by nature but by thoughtless imitation. He had faith in God. He repented and God forgave him. He displayed humility before God and humbled himself. He did not let his transgression reach the depths of his heart and destroy his nature. The king truly repented and, in doing so, he avoided permanent moral damage.

King Saul represents sin by nature and, consequently, bad kingship. The main characteristic of bad kingship is arrogance before God, which obstructs real repentance and estranges man from God. Saul had not enough faith in God. His unhappiness had its origin in his lack of faith in God. He never really repented and therefore God abandoned him. King Saul confessed his transgression to Samuel: 'And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words, because I feared the people, and

⁵⁴⁶ When Saul intrudes into the office of a priest, he is rejected by God: 1 Samuel 13: 8-14; And God's disapproval of the first king of Israel comes soon in 1 Samuel 15:11 'It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments'; And in 1 Samuel 15:35: 'And God repented that he had made Saul king over Israel'.

obeyed their voice'.⁵⁴⁷ Thus, according to his own confession, it was the disobedience to God, out of arrogance, and the obedience to the people, out of fear, that was the true cause of his fall. Interestingly enough, arrogance and fear had also caused the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Old Testament.

2.4.2 Good and bad Government

The juxtaposition of good and bad kingship is also a recurrent theme in the homilies of Ælfric. The latter mentions King Nebuchadnezzar as a proud king: 'Thus humbled the Almighty God the proud King Nebuchadnezzar (the heathen king) and his son Belshazzar'⁵⁴⁸ and, further on, '[e]very one of those which exalt themselves shall be humbled and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted.'⁵⁴⁹ On the contrary, when Ælfric mentions King Hezekiah, who was God's favourite, Ælfric uses the word faithful.⁵⁵⁰ In the 'Nativity of Saint Clement the martyr', Ælfric refers to the faithful king Hezekiah and to King David.⁵⁵¹ In his homilies, he often refers to King David and King Solomon as representatives of good kingship in the Bible. Ælfric exalts the power of wisdom by saying: 'By gold is wisdom betoken as Solomon said "A desirable gold-treasure lieth in the wise man's mouth"'.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁷ 1 Samuel 15:24.

⁵⁴⁸ Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., 'The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost', in *The Homilies of Ælfric* (London, 1844-6), vol. i, p. 435.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 433.

⁵⁵⁰ Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., 'The Nativity of St. Clement the Martyr', in *The Homilies of Ælfric*, vol. i, p. 569. 'It happened in the fourteenth year of the reign of Hezekiah, the Jewish king, that Sennacherib, king of Assyria, had bowed many nations with great craft to his power, and so would be also the faithful king Hezekiah, and sent his general Rabshaken to the city of Jerusalem with a great host'.

⁵⁵¹ B. Thorpe, 'Nativity of St Clement the Martyr', in *The Homilies of Ælfric*, vol. i, p. 569.

⁵⁵² B. Thorpe, 'January VI, The Epiphany of the Lord', in *The Homilies of Ælfric*, vol. i, p. 105.

'In the 'Second Sunday After the Lord's Epiphany', Ælfric compares King David with Christ and the unbelieving Jews with the King Saul: 'In a ghostly sense we may see in David a sign of Christ: in Saul's persecution, the persecution by the unbelieving Jews of Christ and Church; and their earthly kingdom was overthrown for their wicked deeds, in likeness of Saul'.⁵⁵³ Referring to King David again, he says that 'David then reigned in the land of Judah forty years, and lived his life acceptably to God, and through the Holy Ghost composed the psalms that we sing at God's lauds'.⁵⁵⁴ In another reference to King David, in 'On the Dedication of the Church', Ælfric writes that 'David then reigned in the land of Judah forty years, and lived his life acceptably to God, and through the Holy Ghost composed the psalms that we sing at God's lauds'.⁵⁵⁵

The Old Testament shows that bad kingship leads to failure and good kingship leads to victory. It is in this persistent juxtaposition between good and bad kingship the ideal of good kingship is explicitly formed. Asser compares King Alfred with King Solomon:

... emulating in this the pious and most illustrious and rich Solomon, king of the Hebrews, who, despising all present glory and riches, sought first wisdom from God, and also found both, wisdom and present glory, as it is written: "Seek therefore first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be granted on to you".⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵³ B. Thorpe, 'The Second Sunday after Lord's Epiphany' in *The Homilies of Ælfric*, p. 65.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 'On the Dedication of a Church', in B. Thorpe, ed., *The Homilies of Ælfric*, vol. I, p. 576.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 576.

⁵⁵⁶ Dorothy Whitelock, From Asser's 'Life of King Alfred', in *EHD*, 7, pp. 261-276, at p. 268.

In the *Life of St Oswald*, there are references to bad kingship, which again go back to biblical exemplars. Byrhtferth's attempt to associate King Edgar with the virtues of certain great figures of the past is what Michael Lapidge identifies as a 'hagiographical *topos*.'⁵⁵⁷

King Edgar is praised as a 'merciful king' and compared to the 'excellent' emperor Constantine: 'Then the merciful king, full of clemency-not like that Chaldean tyrant [Nebuchadnezzar] raging against God's soldiers, or like the wretched Decius martyring Christ's glorious combatants, but rather (if I may say so) following the example of the excellent emperor Constantine'.⁵⁵⁸ Byrhtferth's encomium to King Edgar continues in the same tone. Edgar is praised for his support to the monks and is compared to David, Solomon, St Paul, Moses and Joshua.

Now this King Edgar, mighty in arms, exulting in sceptres, and regally protecting the laws of the kingdom with militant authority, had trampled under his feet all the proud necks of his enemies. It was not only the chieftains and rulers of this island who feared him, but also the kings of many foreign peoples: hearing of his great wisdom they were struck with fear and terror. He was militant like that excellent psalmist the son of Jesse [David], wise like Solomon, just like St Paul, merciful like Moses, daring like Joshua, 'terrible like the battle-line of camps

⁵⁵⁷ Michael Lapidge notes that the Byrhtferth *topos* has many similarities with passages of the following sources: first, the letter by the priest Uranius on the death of Paulinus of Nola (*Epistula de Obitu Paulini* [BHL, 6558], c. 8 and, secondly, the prayer of consecration in the so-called 'Second Anglo-Saxon Coronation *Ordo*' in Turner ed., *The Claudius Pontificalis*. See Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *The Life of St Oswald*, in *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgbwine* (Oxford, 2009), p. 74, note 105.

⁵⁵⁸ M. Lapidge, ed. and trans., Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *The Life of St Oswald*, p. 79, iii. 12.

drawn up, gentle and kindly to everyone but especially to monks, whom he honoured as brothers and loved like dear sons. He held clerics in contempt; he honoured men of our order, as I have said, once the trifles of the clerics had been cast out of the monasteries.⁵⁵⁹

In Ælfric's words, human creation—such as the composition of the psalms by King David—comes as a result of divine grace and inspiration given to the virtuous ones. The elect ones receive from God spiritual gifts and exquisite qualities, which come as a reward for their pure heart and their faith. Human pride leads to sin and to subsequent fall. The covenant between man and God is weakened from the moment man claims that whatever is given to him by the grace of God is his property.

In the sermon 'On the Dedication of a Church', Ælfric, when describing the hallowing of the temple by King Solomon, presents to the congregation the portrait of an ideal king:

Solomon then gathered all his councillors to the hallowing of the temple, and there offered to God manifold gifts, which were reckoned twenty two thousand oxen, and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. And the King with bended knees before the altar a long while prayed, and commended that great house to God, as a prayer-house for him and his people, and for strengthening, and protection against that assault of every evil. He stood then and blessed the folk and said, "Blessed be our Lord, who hath given rest and stillness to his people

⁵⁵⁹ Michael Lapidge, *The Life of St Oswald*, p. 75, iii. 10.

Israel, according to the words which he before spake through Moses his servant".⁵⁶⁰

Ælfric explains to the congregation:

It is longsome for us to narrate all the blessings and thanks that Solomon said to God in sight of his people, and the people afterwards, with blithe heart, on the eighth day returned home, thanking the Almighty for all his benefits. This narrative has a ghostly signification. Now Solomon is interpreted Peaceful, for he and all his people continued in full peace the while that his days were, which were forty years. He is a type of our Saviour Christ, who descended from heaven to this world, because he would restore peace.⁵⁶¹

The account of King Solomon's Hallowing of the Temple is particularly interesting because Ælfric's comments on the biblical story stress the similarities between King Solomon and the Anglo-Saxon kings in the three prefatory miniatures. First, King Solomon is referred to as *peaceful*, as King Edgar was called later. The strength of King Edgar—not a man renowned for great military achievements—lay in his decision to reform the Church with the help of Dunstan, Æthelwold, and Oswald. He established the Benedictine Rule in the monasteries and restored peace in the Church.

In the Hallowing of the Temple, King Solomon offers a large number of presents to God. The same practice was kept and promoted by the Anglo-Saxon

⁵⁶⁰ Benjamin Thorpe, *Homilies of Ælfric*, 'On the Dedication of the Church', p. 579.

⁵⁶¹ B. Thorpe, 'On the Dedication of the Church', p. 579.

kings. King Æthelstan and King Edgar, King Cnut and Queen Emma were great benefactors of the Church. In the three prefatory miniatures the Anglo-Saxon kings are standing in veneration before divine authorities. King Æthelstan holds an open book, King Edgar raises his closed book towards Christ in Majesty, and King Cnut places a large, golden cross on the altar of the New Minster Abbey, standing opposite to Queen Emma, who greets his noble gesture. In the New Minster Charter, when King Edgar throws his head back and turns to God with open raised arms, and bending knees, his *orans* stance echoes visually Ælfric's homily, 'And Solomon prayed long before the altar and he offered the church as a prayer house'.⁵⁶²

2.5 'For the Salvation of my Soul'⁵⁶³

2.5.1 'And he walked with God'⁵⁶⁴

In Anglo-Saxon manuscript illumination, the posture of biblical figures before God reflects that of King Edgar: they incline before Him in veneration with raised arms. In the Old English Hexateuch produced in Canterbury in the first half of the eleventh century (BL, Cotton Claudius B. iv) Abraham is depicted standing in veneration with raised arms when God advises him to leave his country (Cotton Claudius B. iv, fol. 21r; fig. 155); when God promises Abraham that his seed shall be as numerous as the stars (Cotton Claudius B. iv, fol. 26v; fig. 156); and when

⁵⁶² *Homilies of Ælfric*, 'On the Dedication of the Church', p. 579.

⁵⁶³ Extract from King Edgar's charter to St Werburg in Chester in 958. See C. P. Lewis, 'Edgar, Chester, and the Kingdom of the Mercians', in Donald Scragg, ed., *Edgar: King of the English, 959-975* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 118; S 667.

'for the salvation of my soul and [the souls] of the predecessors Edmund, famous king of the English and my father, and also Æthelstan of blessed memory, most noble king of the same people'. As Lewis p

⁵⁶⁴ Gen 5:24, 6:9.

God appears to Abraham before the Sacrifice of Isaac (Cotton Claudius B. iv, fol. 37v; fig. 159).

The vitality of Abraham's movement with the strong turning of his raised head towards God and his legs spread, is very similar to the posture of King Edgar in the prefatory miniature.⁵⁶⁵ A very similar posture is repeated by Moses in the Bible of San Paolo fuori le Mura, written in Reims (?) c.870 [Rome, Basilica di San Paolo fuori le Mura, MS Lat. 1, fol. 50 (Ixxviii)v] in the Frontispiece to Deuteronomy which depicts the final oration of Moses, his vision on Mount Nebo and his death (fig. 95). At the top of the miniature, the biblical patriarch stands in veneration before the Hand of God with raised arms and his head looking towards the divine presence.

Parallels in the iconography of the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter can be traced in the Ascension of Christ, the Assumption of the Virgin, and in apocalyptic scenes. The iconography of biblical personages 'taken' by God in the Old Testament such as scenes of the Translation of Enoch stresses the upward movement of the figure, expressed with raised arms and head turned towards the heavens.

Similarly, in ascension and assumption scenes in the New Testament several figures who witness the supernatural event express their awe by adopting the posture of raised arms and head turned to heavens. In the Ascension of Christ from a tenth-century Byzantine ivory, Christ in Majesty is lifted to heavens by

⁵⁶⁵ Other biblical figures standing with raised arms feature in fol. 28r *Hagar in the wilderness* (Gen xvi.7) fol. 55v; *The messenger before Tamar* (Gen xxxviii.13), fol. 31v; *Lot receives the angels who bear news of the impending destruction of Sodom* (Gen xix.1- 3, 12-13), fol. 33r; *Lot beholds his wife being turned into a pillar of salt* (Gen xix. 26) and fol. 6r *Adam in the Garden of Eden* (Gen 11.15-17).

angels while on the ground the Virgin Mary and the apostles are looking upwards marvelling at the supernatural event (fig. 105).

The Ascension in the ninth-century *Æthelstan Psalter* (MS Cotton Galba A. xviii, fol. 120v) shows Christ in Majesty in a mandorla surrounded by angels and below the Virgin Mary standing frontally with raised arms surrounded by the apostles (fig. 104). The same iconography is reiterated in the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in the *Rabbula Gospels*, written in the late sixth century in Syria (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Cod. Plut. I. 56, fol. 13v; fig. 106).

However, it is the posture of the Old Testament patriarch Enoch, in miniatures of Junius 11 and the Old English Hexateuch, which shows the strongest similarities with that of King Edgar in the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter. Enoch and Noah are the only two prophets in the Bible known to have 'walked with God'. Enoch walked with God in Genesis (Gen 5:21-4):

Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So, all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

The extract in Genesis suggests that Enoch was translated to heaven because he was very close to God. *Ælfric* refers to Enoch in his treatise 'On the Old and New Testaments':

The seventh man from Adam was called Enoch, he did God's will, and God took him up with his whole body, up from this life, and he is living

yet, just as is the noble prophet Elias, who was taken to the other life, and both shall come against Antichrist, to conquer his lies through the power of God. They will then be slain by that same fiend, and they will rise again just as all men will do.⁵⁶⁶

Enoch's great-grandson, Noah, also 'walked faithfully with God' and because of his righteousness, only Noah and his family were saved in the Flood (Gen 6:9): 'This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.' In a literal reading, both Enoch and Noah were granted the privilege to come into the presence of God, to stand and walk with Him. Metaphorically, 'to walk' means to 'conduct one's life in a particular manner'.⁵⁶⁷ In short, 'to walk' relates to behaviour and conduct. It means to be or act in association with somebody; it implies a proximity to the other person, a parallel life and harmonious coexistence. Therefore, 'to walk with God' may also suggest special revelations made by God to Enoch and Noah.

In Genesis, Enoch's translation takes place before the judgment of the Deluge. The reason of his translation is illustrated in Hebrews (Heb 11:5): 'By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God'. By contrast, Noah is not translated like Enoch but he is saved from the Deluge by building the ark under God's instructions. In Hebrews (Heb 11:7) Noah's faith is also stressed: 'By faith Noah being warned of God of things not

⁵⁶⁶ *The Old English Version of the Hexateuch, Ælfric's Treatise on the Old and New Testament and his Preface to Genesis*, ed. S. J. Crawford, EETS OS 160 (Oxford, 1922; repr. 1969 with additional texts transcribed by N. R. Ker), p. 23.

⁵⁶⁷ Definitions.net, 'to walk': to behave; to pursue a course of life; to conduct one's self.

seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.' In Hebrews, the phrase 'by faith' is repetitively used as the indispensable element of salvation. Accordingly, Enoch and Noah set an example of faith. They walked with God because they were faithful and obedient to God.⁵⁶⁸

2.5.2 The æereal and ethereal Heaven

In the Old Testament only Enoch, descendant of Adam and ancestor of Noah, and the prophet Elijah were translated to heaven. The theological meaning of the verb 'to translate' is 'to transfer a person from one place or plane of existence to another, as from earth to heaven'. In the New Testament for the transition of Christ from earth into Heaven, the word 'translation' is replaced by 'ascension'.⁵⁶⁹ And the word 'assumption' is used for 'the taking up of the Virgin Mary, body and soul, into heaven when her earthly life was ended'.⁵⁷⁰ This probably suggests that Enoch's and Elijah's translation in the Old Testament prefigures the ascension of Christ and the assumption of the Virgin Mary in the New Testament.

In Kings (2Kings 2:11) it is said about Elijah: 'And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses

⁵⁶⁸ The same ideas of faith and obedience are reiterated in the New Testament (John 2:3): 'Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep his commandments. He who says 'I know Him', and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.'

⁵⁶⁹ Ac 1:9; Ascension Day is the 40th day after Easter, when the Ascension of Christ into heaven is celebrated; In Collins Dictionary the verb ascend: 1. to go or move up 2., to rise to a higher level 3., to ascend to throne to become king or queen.

⁵⁷⁰ See B. Thorpe, 'The Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary', *The Homilies of Ælfric*, vol. ii, p. 445, see also 'On the Assumption of the Blessed May', vol. i, pp. 437-455.

of fire, and separated them, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.⁵⁷¹ There are also prophecies of Elijah's return (Malachi 4:5-6) 'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse'. In the biblical accounts, the emphasis placed on the separation of the prophets from the rest of the people before their ensuing elevation suggests that Enoch and Elijah are God's elect. Likewise in the prefatory miniatures the Anglo-Saxon monarch's separation from the rest of the people and his proximity to the sacred and divine establishes him as God's elect and carries the promise of salvation. In one of his homilies, Ælfric explains to the congregation the significance of the translation of Enoch and Elijah and the ærial stage they were placed in:

We read in the Old Law, that two men of God, Enoch and Elijah, were lifted to heaven without death: but they await death, and will by no means escape from it. They are taken to the ærial heaven, not to the ethereal, and continue in some secret dwelling-place with great strength of body and soul, until they shall return again, at the end of the world, against the Antichrist, and shall receive death. We read of the prophet Elijah, that angels conveyed him in a heavenly chariot, because the infirmity of his nature required some support. The first mentioned man, Enoch, was conveyed to the ærial heaven, and Elijah was born up in the chariot.⁵⁷²

⁵⁷¹ In 1Kings 18-19 Elijah defended the worship of Yahweh over the idol worship of the Canaanite god Baal. In the New Testament Elijah appears with Moses during the Transfiguration of Jesus (fig. 143).

⁵⁷² B. Thorpe, ed. and trans., 'The Sermon of the Lord's Ascension' in the *Homilies of Ælfric*, p. 309.

Ælfric refers to two levels in heaven: the ærial and the ethereal one. The ærial heaven unlike the ethereal one is a transitory stage that lasts until the Last Judgment. The ærial heaven occurs in the Old Testament and the ethereal one in the New Testament. This probably explains why in the Old Testament the word 'translation' is used for the transition of Enoch and Elijah to the ærial heaven, while in the New Testament the words 'ascension' and 'assumption' are used respectively for the transition of Christ and the Virgin Mary to the ethereal heaven.

In the Caedmon manuscript, written in Christ Church, Canterbury in c.1000 or in the first quarter of the eleventh century (Oxford, Bodleian, Junius 11, p.61) an outline drawing depicts the *Translation of Enoch* (fig. 151). Enoch's posture—holding an open book in his left hand, with his head looking upwards to the Disappearing Christ and the arms raised and flung at the height of his head—is very similar to Edgar's. In another miniature (MS Junius 11, p. 58) the biblical patriarch *Malaleel*, son of Cainan, adopts a similar posture standing in front of an altar (fig. 152).

The close relationship between Enoch and God as suggested in the biblical account 'and he was not; for God took him' is further stressed in the iconography of Enoch's translation in the Old English Hexateuch (Cotton MS Claudius B. iv, fol. 11v) where God walks up a ladder leading to heaven holding Enoch's hand (fig. 153). Accordingly, the biblical text 'for God took him' finds echo in the image of God and Enoch walking up the ladder hand in hand.

Both the Old English Hexateuch and the Junius 11 manuscripts show a strong interdependence between text and image with the one reflecting the

other.⁵⁷³ Clear similarities between text and image can also be noticed in the New Minster Charter miniature of King Edgar, inclined in adoration before God, and the couplet on the opposite folio 3r: '[t]hus he who created the stars sits on a lofty throne; King Edgar, inclined in veneration, adores him' (fig. 4).

Similarities with King Edgar's posture before Christ in Majesty can be seen in another outline drawing in Junius 11, p. 60, where Enoch is portrayed haloed, probably to be differentiated from Enoch, the son of Cain (fig. 150).⁵⁷⁴ With raised arms, holding an open book, trampling on a dragon, and looking upwards to the angel Enoch's figure reflects that of King Edgar.

Catherine Karkov identifies Enoch as a prefiguration of Christ and suggests that the open book is an expression of Enoch's faith to God, which leads to his salvation. The dragon has also been interpreted as the Antichrist, with whom Enoch will encounter when he comes back to earth before his second and final translation to Heaven.⁵⁷⁵ In Anglo-Saxon art Christ has been portrayed trampling on the beasts in scenes of the Harrowing of Hell and the Last Judgment. The open book which Enoch holds may refer to his association with writing since he was held to be the inventor of writing.⁵⁷⁶ In Rabbanical literature Enoch is described as *Saffra Rabba*, that is, great scribe. He was also called the scribe of righteousness.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷³ The Old English Hexateuch, fol. 11v (left) Jared with his family and (right) his death. (left) Enoch with his family and (right) he is taken up to heaven by God.

⁵⁷⁴ 'Enoch' means dedication/teacher and identifies with the Feast of Dedication (Feast of Lights) and the translation (John 10:22-24) For the meaning of the name of Enoch see *The Cædmon Manuscript of Anglo-Saxon Biblical Poetry*, Junius 11 in the Bodleian Library Junius 11, ed. Israel Gollanz (London, 1927), pp. x1-x1ii.

⁵⁷⁵ *The Old English Version of the Hexateuch, Ælfric's Treatise on the Old and New Testament and his Preface to Genesis*, ed. S. J. Crawford, EETS OS 160 (Oxford, 1922; repr. 1969 with additional texts transcribed by N. R. Ker), p. 23; Catherine Karkov, 2001. *Text and Picture in Anglo-Saxon England*, (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 6-11.

⁵⁷⁶ Book of Jubilees, iv 18.

⁵⁷⁷ 1Enoch xii, 4, xiv. I

2.5.3 Pentecost and other Apocalyptic Scenes

Pentecost and the Anglo-Saxons

Pentecost is a Greek word, that means 'fifty days' since it comes fifty days from the Sabbath after Passover. Celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Easter, the religious festival of Pentecost or Whitsun commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit from Heaven to the disciples to give them 'the gift of tongues' that allowed them to go and spread the word of Jesus in many languages (Acts 2:1-42). Pentecost is also the feast of the 'wheat harvest' concluding the spiritual 'year's end' (Exodus 34:21-22), which Christ states is 'the end of the world' in the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13: 24-39).⁵⁷⁸ Jews celebrate Pentecost as the day Moses received the Law (the Tablets with the Ten Commandments) on Mount Sinai and the nation Israel was born (Exodus 24:15-18) (Romans 9:4) (Ephesians 6:2) (Daniel 12:4).

According to Jewish tradition based on the Book of Enoch, Enoch was born at Pentecost and he was also taken to heaven on the holy day of Pentecost. *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch* confirms Enoch's birthday and translation day as Sivan 6, which we know as Pentecost.⁵⁷⁹ 'In the West, Easter and Pentecost were sanctioned for Baptism. Pentecost soon became one of the most important events

⁵⁷⁸ Coming in the early summer (May-June), Pentecost also indicates the arrival of summer and the beginning of the annual wheat harvest and the first fruits.

⁵⁷⁹ A passage from chapter 68 of *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch* confirms Enoch's birthday and rapture day as Tsivan 6, which we know as Pentecost. LXVIII: 'Enoch was born on the sixth day of the month Tsivan! He lived 365 years. He was taken up into heaven on the first day of the month Tsiva, and he was in heaven sixty days. He wrote down the descriptions of all the creation which the Lord had made, and he wrote 366 books, and gave them to his sons. And he was on earth thirty days, and thus he was taken to heaven in the same month Tsivan on the same day the sixth day; the day on which he was born, and the same hour. As each man has but a dark existence in this life, so also is his beginning and birth, and departure from this life. In what hour he began; in that he was born, and in that he departs.' See R. H. Charles, ed., and W. R. Morfill, trans., *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch* (Oxford, 1896), ch., lxviii: 1-4, pp. 83-84.

of the church calendar. Accordingly, Christians celebrate it as the day the Holy Spirit came down to the apostles after the ascension of Christ (Acts 2:1-42) and to all baptised Christians, and also as the day that Church was born with baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:2-4). For this reason, Enoch has also been interpreted as a prefiguration of the Church, being born on the Feast of Pentecost. Since teaching is a primary function of the Church, further association with Enoch and the church comes from the patriarch's name which means dedication/teacher.⁵⁸⁰

Anglo-Saxons favoured the feast of Pentecost for baptism and coronation ceremonies and the Anglo-Saxon kings of the ninth and tenth centuries also preferred it for the making of the law.⁵⁸¹ There is evidence of Anglo-Saxon baptismal practices at Pentecost as early as the sixth century. King, Ethelbert became a Christian and was baptised on the feast of Pentecost in 597.⁵⁸² Eanflæd, daughter of King Edwin, was baptised on the eve of Pentecost on the eighth of June in 626.⁵⁸³ The following year, 627, King Edwin 'was baptized with his people at Easter'.⁵⁸⁴ According to Ælfric Pentecost is a day when men are turned to gods by the infusion of the Holy Ghost.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸⁰ 'Enoch' means dedication/teacher and identifies with the Feast of Dedication (Feast of Lights) and the translation (John 10:22-24) For the meaning of the name of Enoch see Israel Gollanz, ed., *The Cædmon Manuscript of Anglo-Saxon Biblical Poetry, Junius 11 in the Bodleian Library* (London, 1927).

⁵⁸¹ Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 39-40. On the feast of Pentecost in Anglo-Saxon England, see Bradford Bedingfield, *The Dramatic Liturgy of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 210-17; Simon Keynes, 'An abbot, an archbishop, and the Viking raids of 1006-7 and 1009-12', *ASE* 36 (2007), pp. 157-179.

⁵⁸² John Godfrey, 'The Mission of St Augustine', in *The Church in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1962) pp. 67-93; Thomas of Elmham, *History Monasterii S. Augustini Cantuariensis*, RS, p. 78. The text here is doubtful, and it is perhaps more likely that the king's baptism took place at the end of the year along with that of his people in general.

⁵⁸³ ASC, C (A, B) 626 'In this year Eanflæd, King Edwin's daughter, was baptized on the holy eve of Pentecost', Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *EHD*, p. 40.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p. 40; See also J. A. Giles, ed., *HE* (London, 1892) ch. xiv, pp. 96-97.

⁵⁸⁵ Bradford Bedingfield, 'The End of the Beginning. Pentecost', pp. 210-217.

Anglo-Saxon coronation ceremonies are also related to Pentecost. May the eleventh 973 was Pentecost Sunday and the day chosen for the coronation or probably the second coronation of King Edgar at Bath abbey, marked in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as 'This year Edgar the etheling was consecrated king at Bath, on Pentecost's mass-day, on the fifth before the ides of May...', and also in verse: 'Here was Edgar, of Angles lord, with courtly pomp hallow'd to king at Akemancester, the ancient city; whose modern sons, dwelling therein, have named her BATH. Much bliss was there by all enjoyed on that happy day, named Pentecost by men below.'⁵⁸⁶

In the outline drawing of the Pentecost in the Tiberius Psalter, c.1050 (British Museum, Cotton MS Tiberius C.vi, fol. 15v), the apostles are depicted enthroned with the Holy Spirit descending among them. The crown held by one of the apostles on the left brings royal overtones to the composition uniting kingship with the feast of the Pentecost (fig. 72).

The practice of the great men of the kingdom assembling to make the law at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost began under Cenwulf of Mercia and Ecgberht in Wessex.⁵⁸⁷ In the second code of King Edgar, tithes are due at Pentecost, the Equinox, and Martinmas: 'the tithe of all young animals shall be rendered by Pentecost, and that of the fruits of the earth by the Equinox, and every Church due (ciricsceat) shall be rendered by Martinmas.'⁵⁸⁸ At Pentecost 993 at Winchester

⁵⁸⁶ ASC, 973 See Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *EHD*, p. 207.

⁵⁸⁷ The earliest for Mercia is S 120 (780) or 163 (808), and for Wessex S 272-3 (825). After 900, there are four assemblies meeting at Christmas, thirteen at Easter and four at Pentecost. See Patrick Wormald, 'Legislation as Literature', in *The Making of the English Law: King Alfred to the twelfth Century*, Massachusetts, 2001 p. 416-464, p. 445-446.

⁵⁸⁸ See also 'The Laws of Ine (688-694)' in Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD* (London, 1955), p. 365. See also, Frederick L. Attenborough, *The laws of the earliest English kings* (Cambridge, 1922) Ine 4; p. 37. See William A. Chaney, 'Economics of Ruler-Cult in Anglo-Saxon Law', in *The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England: The Transition from Paganism to Christianity* (Manchester, 1970), pp. 221-247.

King Æthelred summoned a council to discuss 'whatever was worthy of the heavenly Creator, whatever was suited to the salvation of my soul ... and whatever was timely for all the people of the English'.⁵⁸⁹ In 1008 King Æthelred summoned the witan at Enham, in Hampshire to celebrate the feast of Pentecost on the sixteenth of May.⁵⁹⁰

Apocalyptic Scenes

The iconography of apocalyptic scenes often features figures in rear view with raised arms and heads looking upwards to the divine presence in heavens or descending from heavens. The faithful expresses his awe to the divine by adopting a posture of adoration, very similar to that of King Edgar before Christ in Majesty in the New Minster Charter. By inclining, deeply bowing or prostrating, the supplicant unequivocally proclaims his faith and obedience and enters a plea for salvation.

Apocalyptic motifs become strong in the fourth century with the establishment of Christianity as state religion under Theodosius.⁵⁹¹ In the fifth and sixth centuries, apocalyptic motifs such as the worship of Christ or the Lamb by the twenty-four Elders (Apoc. 4-5) in the type of the *aurum coronarium* occurred in

⁵⁸⁹ S 876, see Patrick Wormald, 'Legislation as Literature', in *The Making of the English Law* (Oxford, 1999), p. 328.

⁵⁹⁰ Simon Keynes, 'An abbot, an archbishop, and the Viking raids of 1006-7 and 1009-12', *Anglo-Saxon England* 36 (Cambridge University Press) (2007), p. 177; Ælfric expounds on Pentecost in his homily 'On the Holy Day of Pentecost', in B. Thorpe, *The Homilies of Ælfric*, vol. 1, pp. 311-329; For Pentecost, see M. B. Bedingfield, *The Dramatic Liturgy of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 210-17.

⁵⁹¹ Such motifs included the scroll with the seven seals and the Lamb surrounded by the Four Living Creatures in images of the *hetoimasia*—the empty throne reserved for Christ and symbolizing his reign; and the Lamb on the mountain, the Four Living Creatures, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and the Alpha and Omega in representations of Christ in the midst of the company of Apostles. The appearance of apocalyptic motifs has been interpreted as anxiety about the Last Judgement. See Peter. K. Klein, 'The Apocalypse in Medieval Art', pp. 160-165.

Rome.⁵⁹² The lost Carolingian mosaic of the adoration of the enthroned Lamb by the twenty-four Elders in the cupola of the imperial chapel at Aachen (c.800) was probably modelled the Roman *aurum coronarium* ceremony and reflected early Christian triumphal arch mosaics showing similar compositions.⁵⁹³ Dale Kinney suggests that the 'bent, obeisant posture' of the Elders is typical of the imagery of *aurum coronarium*.⁵⁹⁴ Richard Klein notes that the development of apocalyptic motifs served in connecting empire and church, making parallels between the earthly and heavenly king. In these scenes Christ was portrayed 'as the triumphant emperor and *pantocrator*'.⁵⁹⁵

The vision of Adoration of the Lamb is based on the Book of Revelation and is closely related to the theme of Theophany.⁵⁹⁶ This kind of iconography can be seen in the adoration of the Lamb of the late Carolingian Codex Aureus of Saint Emmeram, produced in the Court School of Charles the Bald c.870 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 14000, fol. 6r).⁵⁹⁷ The Elders holding crowns respond to the divine presence of the Lamb in heaven with upturned heads and vigorous movements, strongly resembling the dynamic posture of Edgar (fig. 100).

⁵⁹² The *aurum coronarium* was an imperial ceremony, in which gifts, named *coronae*, were given to the emperor. See Dale Kinney, 'The Apocalypse in Early Christian Monumental Decoration', in Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn, *The Apocalypse in the Middle-Ages* (Cornell, 1992), p. 205. p. 200-217.

⁵⁹³ Peter K. Klein, 'The Apocalypse in Medieval Art', pp. 160-166.

⁵⁹⁴ Dale Kinney, 'The Apocalypse in Early Christian Monumental Decoration', p. 205.

⁵⁹⁵ Peter K. Klein, 'The Apocalypse in Medieval Art', in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, eds. Richard Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Cornell, 1992), p. 162.

⁵⁹⁶ Peter K. Klein, 'The Apocalypse in Medieval Art', pp. 160-166.

⁵⁹⁷ In the eleventh century a new motif emerges in the Adoration of the Lamb. Surrounding Christ, the twenty-four Elders are depicted enthroned holding cups and musical instruments. From the ninth to the thirteenth centuries, the same early Christian apocalyptic motifs continued but often modified with the addition of images of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Bride of the Lamb, and the heavenly city of paradise (Apoc. 21-22) as a single motif, not always related to the Apocalypse. See Peter K. Klein, 'The Apocalypse in Medieval Art', pp. 160-166.

Dale Kinney suggests that the 'bent, obeisant posture' of the Elders is typical of the imagery of *aurum coronarium*.⁵⁹⁸ King Edgar, like the Elders, is also in the act of adoration before the divine presence, thus showing that the iconography of the prefatory miniature reflects the couplet on fol. 3r of the New Minster Charter (fig. 5).

In Ottonian manuscript illumination, we also find figures in postures similar to that of King Edgar. In the *Pentecost* miniature in the Codex Egberti, written in c.997-93 (Trier, Stadtbibliothek, MS 24, fol. 103) the figures, in the lower row, adopt the same stance with their backs turned to the onlooker and looking upwards with raised arms (fig. 103).

In the manuscript illumination of this period, the figure of the earthly Ecclesia is usually depicted in rear view with raised arms. In the *Illustration of All Saints*, from a sacramentary written in Fulda in the late tenth century (Udine, Archivio Capitolare, MS 1, fol. 66v), the haloed female figure, dressed in lilac and gold, has been interpreted as the personification of the heavenly Church. She is depicted in the middle of haloed angels, and groups of haloed and crowned figures arrayed in the sky on either side of the Lamb above. Standing in three quarter view with her head upwards facing the Lamb the heavenly Church is raising a gold chalice towards the *Agnus Dei* (fig. 102). Below, members of the earthly Church stand with raised arms. The female figure standing in the middle of this group has been interpreted as a personification of the earthly Ecclesia. Dressed in green, she is depicted in full rear posture and with raised open arms.⁵⁹⁹ Another rear depiction of a female figure as a personification of the earthly Ecclesia comes from the frontispiece of a Pericopes Book, written in Fulda c.970

⁵⁹⁸ Dale Kinney, 'The Apocalypse in Early Christian Monumental Decoration', p. 205.

⁵⁹⁹ See H. Mayr-Harting, 'Fulda Saints and Sacramentaries' in *Ottonian Book Illumination*, 1991, pt. 2, p. 151.

(Aschaffenburg, Hofbibliothek, MS 2, fol. 1v). Dressed in green and lilac and holding a standard mounted with a cross in her left hand, the earthy Ecclesia turns her head upwards facing the Lamb and offering him her raised golden chalice (fig. 101).

2.5.4 The Virgin and the Cross

King Edgar's donation to St Werburg in Chester in 958 was made, 'for the salvation of my soul and [the souls] of the predecessors Edmund, famous king of the English and my father, and also Æthelstan of blessed memory, most noble king of the same people'. As C. P. Lewis notes, Edgar selected only his father and his uncle as examples of famous kings of the English.⁶⁰⁰ By paying respect to his predecessors and, especially—and quite unusually as Lewis stresses—by asking for salvation on their behalf, Edgar presents himself as the very confident heir to the kingdom. The king is keen to continue the royal line and be as glorious as his predecessors.

Intercession

Edgar's zeal for salvation and glory is fervently expressed in the prefatory miniature of the Charter by his close proximity to Christ in Majesty and by being flanked with the best advocates of redemption, the Virgin Mary and St Peter, patrons of the New Minster. Robert Deshman suggests that the Virgin Mary and St Peter present an 'insular Deisis', in which John the Baptist is replaced by St Peter.

⁶⁰⁰ *Pro expiatione anime mee meorumque predecessorum Eadmundi videlicet incliti Anglorum Regis et genitoris mei; necnon et beate memorie Ethelstani eiusdem gentis Regis nobilissimi*. See C. P. Lewis, 'Edgar, Chester, and the Kingdom of the Mercians', in Donald Scragg, ed., *Edgar: King of the English, 959-975* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 104-23, at p. 118; S 667.

In medieval art, the Virgin Mary and St Peter usually flank Christ in Majesty the same as in the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Liber Vitae (fig. 7).

In the New Minster Charter, the unusual position of the saints flanking Edgar and not Christ in Majesty intends to glorify the king who is purposefully depicted larger than the saints. The placing of the king in such an honoured position facilitates his path to salvation given that the Virgin Mary and St Peter are associated with the Last Judgement. In the reformed minsters at Winchester the Virgin Mary and St Peter were the most honoured saints. The Benedictine order promoted the cult of the Virgin Mary and this is reflected in her prominent position in the *Regularis Concordia*.

In the prefatory miniature Edgar is flanked by the cross and cross-key, evocative of the gold cross that precedes the king's name on folio 3v in the New Minster Charter (fig. 4). The same iconographical scheme occurs in the prefatory miniature of the New Minster *Liber Vitae*. There, the name of King Cnut is placed next to the large gold cross, with the initial 'C' touching the shaft. Furthermore, the name and title of the Anglo-Saxon kings on coinage of the period is, again, flanked by the cross. This is likely to suggest the apotropaic attributes of the cross and its association with resurrection and eternal life. The right-hand gesture of King Edgar, which probably represents the sign of the cross, stresses further the strong presence of the cross in the miniature. The *Regularis Concordia* places special emphasis on the Veneration of the Cross, with the celebration of the principal mass on Fridays in honour of the Holy Cross and three prayers recited at the Veneration of the cross on Good Friday.⁶⁰¹

⁶⁰¹ D. T. Symons, ed., *Regularis Concordia* (London, 1953), p. 7 §10.

The cross and cross-key, held by the Virgin and St Peter, were cognate symbols of the key of David, a paramount Christological symbol.⁶⁰² The symbolism of the key of David can be traced in the second coronation *ordo*, which was used for Edgar's impressive coronation in 973, as well as for his first coronation.⁶⁰³ In the 'Second *ordo*', the king is invested with the 'staff of strength and equity' (*uirgam uirutis Aequitatis*), which symbolises his just rule and his imitation of Christ 'who is the key of David and the sceptre of the house of Israel' (*qui est clavis David et sceptrum domus Israel*).⁶⁰⁴ According to Catherine Karkov, the cross and cross-key, held by the Virgin and St Peter, are symbols of judgement and salvation. They are also symbols of the protection the king offers to the New Minster in exchange for spiritual rewards.⁶⁰⁵

Anna Gannon stresses the apotropaic function of the cross in a small group of gold tremisses c.670, the 'York Group', which depict facing busts between crosses. Some Anglo-Saxon silver pennies c.710-720 show a standing figure holding two tall crosses. The closest parallel to this motif can be found in some Merovingian gold coins c.570/580-c.670 which have merged Roman imagery with Christian designs such as the orans figure. The motif of crosses flanking an orans figure has probably its origin in the iconography of St Menas in the fifth-century Coptic Egypt. Anna Gannon suggests that his type of iconography signals 'the

⁶⁰² Robert Deshman, Robert. 1995. *The Benedictional of Æthelwold* (Princeton, 1995), p. 197.

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁶⁰⁴ Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* p. 86. See also the antiphon introducing 'Lyric 2' of the Exeter Book poem Christ I (The Advent Lyrics): '*O clavis David, et sceptrum domus Israel, qui aperis et nemo claudit*, in B. Muir, *The Exeter Book* (Exeter, 1994), vol. I, p. 47. The blessing following the investiture invokes the protection of the intercessors Mary and Peter, the prince of the Apostles, as well as Gregory, the apostle of the English. See Percy E. Schramm, *Kaiser, Könige und Papst* (Hiersemann, 1969), vol. 3, p. 238.

⁶⁰⁵ Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), p. 86.

talismatic protection obtained through entrenchment between sacred symbols' and that the doubling of the cross expresses superstitious needs.⁶⁰⁶

In the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter, the palm branch in Mary's right hand is a symbol of victory, and the cross and the key-cross, carried by both saints, are symbols of Christ's Passion. On the Hedda Stone, part of a shrine-tomb dating from the first decade of the ninth century (Peterborough Cathedral), the nimbed and veiled female figure holding a short plant stem in her left hand has been interpreted as the Virgin Mary, an image of Incarnation (fig. 109). The stem of the Virgin's short plant ends in a pointed leaf with two lobes at the base. The stem probably refers to the role of the Virgin as the rod of Jesse, bearing the fruit of Christ and becoming the symbol of Incarnation. At an early stage of Anglo-Saxon art, the Virgin is already represented haloed, veiled, and holding a plant stem similar to the one in the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter. Both long sides of the stone depict six standing figures. The figures on the front of the Hedda Stone have been interpreted as Christ, the Virgin Mary and four apostles and the figures on the back as a further six apostles.

In the tenth century the dedications to the Virgin Mary show a significant increase. The *Regularis Concordia* stressed the importance of the patron saints of the reformed houses.⁶⁰⁷ The majority of the reformed houses were dedicated to the Virgin Mary reflecting the increasing devotion to her and her prominent position as intercessor. Twelve out of fourteen refounded houses were dedicated to the Virgin Mary or to the Virgin Mary and another saint. As early as 933, King Æthelstan's foundation for secular clerics at Milton Abbas includes in its

⁶⁰⁶ Anna Gannon, *The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage*, fig. 3.12, pp. 88-89.

⁶⁰⁷ D. T. Symons, ed., *Regularis Concordia* (London, 1953), pp. 14, 31 and 35.

dedication the Virgin Mary.⁶⁰⁸ After the expulsion of the secular clerks, the New Minster house was refounded and rededicated.⁶⁰⁹ In 966, the King Edgar's New Minster Charter includes the Virgin Mary in the dedication: *nostro saluatori eiusque genitrici semper virgini Mariae et omnibus apostolis cum caeteris sanctis*. The foundation charter of Thorney Abbey in c.973 confirms that the church of the abbey was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, St Peter, and St Benedict.⁶¹⁰

Nunneries played an important part in the tenth-century English Church. According to the *Regularis Concordia* agreed at the Council of Winchester in the 970s, nunneries were to be reordered according to the precepts of the Benedictine Rule and placed under the protection of the queen. Prominent among these nunneries were the royally-founded and patronised houses at Shaftesbury, Wilton, and the Nunnaminster at Winchester.

The *Regularis Concordia* places further special emphasis on the cult of the Virgin with the celebration of the principal Mass on Saturdays in honour of the Virgin Mary.⁶¹¹ In the tenth and eleventh centuries there were important developments in private prayers to the Virgin Mary, especially in Winchester, where Æthelwold had composed an Office to the Virgin.⁶¹² Another leader of the Benedictine reform who expressed his personal devotion to the Virgin Mary was Dunstan. In his prayer, the Virgin Mary is the only saint to be individually

⁶⁰⁸ Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 131.

⁶⁰⁹ The New Minster's original dedication is rather complicated with differences between texts; it seems that the Virgin Mary was not included therein. For example, King Edward's charter of 903 named the Trinity, the Virgin Mary and St Peter but the charter of 925 named the Saviour, of the 933 named God and St Peter, and the ones of 940 and 959 named St Peter only. See Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 142.

⁶¹⁰ See R. Krautheimer, 'Sancta Maria Rotunda', in *Studies in Early Christian, Medieval and Renaissance* (London, 1971), pp. 107-14; Richard Gem, 'Towards an Iconography of Anglo-Saxon Architecture', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 46 (1983), pp. 7-12.

⁶¹¹ D. T. Symons, ed., *Regularis Concordia* (London, 1953), p. 7 §10.

⁶¹² R. Krautheimer, 'Sancta Maria Rotunda', p. 110; Cyril R. Hart, *The Early Charters of Eastern England*, (Leicester, 1966), no. 7, p. 167.

mentioned.⁶¹³ In 964, Æthelwold appointed Æthelgar to be the first abbot of the reformed New Minster. Æthelgar, who was a monk in Abington when Æthelwold was abbot there, also regarded the Virgin Mary as his special patron.⁶¹⁴

The Virgin Mary is especially venerated in the Benedictional of St Æthelwold appearing in seven miniatures: the *Annunciation* miniature (fol. 5v), *Christmas* (fol. 15v), the *Octave of Christmas* (fol. 22v), the *Adoration of the Magi* (fol. 24v) (fig. 63), the *Presentation in the Temple* (fol. 34v), the *Ascension* (fol. 64v) and the *Death and Coronation* (102v) (fig. 67). Robert Deshman suggests that the missing first miniature in the Benedictional of St Æthelwold had an insular *Deeisis*, with St Peter and the Virgin Mary interceding with Christ, probably similar to the representation of saints flanking Edgar in the New Minster Charter.⁶¹⁵

In the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter King Edgar 'walks with God' in the same way the Old Testament leaders had done before him. Worshipping before sacred and divine authorities, the Anglo-Saxon king suggests an exclusive and direct relationship with celestial authorities. The close and harmonious relationship between secular and divine authorities sets in motion the iconographical representation of the Anglo-Saxon ruler as a supreme exemplar of royal virtue. He is the anointed Anglo-Saxon king, the righteous Christian king, God's elect, saved by his faith and good deeds. Assuming the role of a triumphant reformer, King Edgar holds the small closed book in his left hand and raises it high up towards God, as a reminder of his successful monastic reform and a symbol of faith and good deeds. Depicted as an iconic Christian ruler, who

⁶¹³ Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 137.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

⁶¹⁵ Deshman, Robert. 1988. 'Benedictus Monarcha et Monarchus: Early Medieval Ruler Theology and the Anglo-Saxon Reform', *FS* 22: 204-40.

simultaneously assumes the role of the representative of the earthly Church, the Anglo-Saxon monarch, as I argue here, becomes a fervent applicant for salvation.

CHAPTER 3: The prefatory miniature of the New Minster *Liber Vitae*



King Cnut and Queen Ælfgifu (Emma) before a large golden cross on an altar, Liber Vitae

fol. 6, Stowe MS 944 (Winchester, c.1031) London, British Library

3.1 Iconographic analysis

3.1.1 Divine, Sacred, Royal and Monastic figures

This section examines the iconography of the full-page prefatory miniature in the New Minster *Liber Vitae* (BL, Stowe MS fol. 6r). The prefatory miniature of the New Minster *Liber Vitae* (fig. 7) is arranged in three levels. In the upper level, Christ in Majesty, in a mandorla, is flanked by the Virgin Mary and St Peter, patrons of the New Minster Abbey. Cross-nimbed and beardless, Christ appears on the top of a rainbow with his feet placed on a stool. He holds an open book on his knee and blesses with his right hand. The Virgin Mary stands on the right of Christ holding a small closed book in her right hand while raising her left hand in a gesture of prayer. On the left, mirroring the Virgin's pose and gesture, St Peter holds a large key in his left hand.⁶¹⁶

⁶¹⁶ Simon Keynes, ed., *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey Winchester: British Library Stowe 944*, together with leaves from British Library Cotton Vespasian A. viii and British Library Cotton Titus D. xxvii, EEMF, 26 (Copenhagen, 1996); A. Herbert, *Illuminated Manuscripts* (London, 1911), pp. 117-18, pl. xiii; H. P. Mitchell, 'Flotsam of Later Anglo-Saxon Art -I and II', *Burlington Magazine*, 42 (1923), pp. 63-72, 162-69 (pp. 64, 167, pl. II); Eric G. Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts from the Xth to the XIIIth Century* (Paris, 1926), pl. 25; Francis Wormald, *English Drawings of the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (London, 1952), pp. 17, 34, 39, 59, 64-65, 69, 72, no. 42, pl. 15; C. R. Dodwell, *The Canterbury School of Illumination 1066-1200* (Cambridge, 1954), p. 119; N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), no. 274; Margaret Rickert, *Painting in Britain: the Middle Ages* (London, 1965), p. 42, pl. 37a; Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts 900-1066* (London, 1976), no. 78; Janet Backhouse, D. H. Turner, and Leslie Webster, eds., *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art*, (London, 1984), no. 62 [exhibition catalogue]; Michelle Brown, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts* (London, 1991), p. 18, pl. 15; Koert van der Horst, William Noel, and Wilhelmina C. M. Wüstefeld, eds., *The Utrecht Psalter in Medieval Art: Picturing the Psalms of David* (Utrecht, 1996), pp. 144-45, 246, 250, 252, fig. 43; www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Stowe_MS_944

On the middle level, identified by prominent inscriptions 'Cnut rex' and 'Ælfgifu regina', the royal couple flank a gold cross placed on a draped altar. Two nimbed angels, depicted only with upper torso, occupy the space between the upper and the middle zones, carrying a veil and a crown. Hovering over Ælfgifu and Cnut, the angels hold the veil over the queen's head and the arched crown over the king's head whilst pointing, with the other hand, to Christ in Majesty, suggesting the divine origin of the royal gifts.

On the lower level, the community of the New Minster Abbey is represented by a group of nine tonsured monks standing in their arcaded stalls. Like the angels above, the monks are not depicted full length. Looking upwards, the monks witness the miraculous event that takes place above them. The central monk holds an open book in his right hand, echoing the open book held by Christ.

The importance of the New Minster *Liber Vitae* is verified by its daily use during mass to commemorate the benefactors of the Winchester community.⁶¹⁷ The emphasis on commemoration is further revealed in the preface of the *Liber Vitae* (ff. 13-13v) which states the commemorative character of the manuscript, and the time and place of the commemoration liturgy in the church:

In this due order follow the names of the brethren and monks as well as friends and benefactors, that they be inscribed into the pages of the heavenly book by the *temporalem recordationem* of this script: that is the names of those, by whose alms this community in Christ is daily nourished. And all who commend themselves to the prayers and

⁶¹⁷ The main scribe, and possibly the illuminator, was Ælsige, a monk of the abbey; see Karkov, 'Ælfgifu and Cnut in the New Minster Liber Vitae' in the *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 121.

fraternity of this community are written into this book so that their commemoration be performed daily in holy mass and psalms. And these names are to be presented *per singulos dies* by the subdeacon in front of the altar at matins and the main mass, and they are to be read – *prout tempus permiserit*.⁶¹⁸

Accordingly, the depiction of the king and the queen flanking the cross in the miniature was intended to emphasise their prominent position in the history of the New Minster. Being part of a *Liber Vitae*, the inscriptions, with the names and titles of the royal couple in the prefatory miniature, have a strong commemorative character which not only suggests the pre-eminence of Cnut and Emma amidst the friends and benefactors of the New Minster, but also shows that they are mentioned first in the church's daily liturgical commemoration.

Both initials of the royal names stand out in a green colour, while the rest of the lettering is in red. Moreover, the inscriptions seem to glorify the figure of the king since Cnut's name is the most prominent: it is written in slightly larger square capitals than the queen's rustic capitals. The initial 'C', attached to the shaft of the cross, becomes an inseparable part of it, further emphasising the close relationship between the king and the cross he holds. The position of the initial next to the

⁶¹⁸ W. de Gray Birch, *Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester* (London-Winchester, 1892), p. 11: *hic ordine condesibili onomata progrediuntur fratrum et monachorum nec non et familiariorum uel benefactorum uiuorum seu defunctorum, ut per temporalem recordationem scripture istius in celestis libri conscribantur pagina. Quorum beneficiis elemosinarum cotidie hec ipsa familia Christo largiente pascitur. Et omnium qui se eius orationibus ac fraternitati commendant, hic generaliter habeantur inscriptia. Quantinus cotidie in sacra missarum celebrationibus vel psalmodiarum concentibus eorum commemoratio fiat.* See also Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', in Carola Hicks, ed., *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Carola Hicks (Stamford, 1992), pp. 231 and 323.

cross recalls the witness list in the New Minster Charter, in which royalty and clergy sign their names next to a cross. The same practice occurs in the coinage of the period, where the name and title of the king starts and ends with the sign of the cross.

The donation of the cross by the royal couple triggers an immediate divine response with the reward of the veil and the crown delivered to them by angels. In the upper zone, the patrons of the New Minster Abbey, the Virgin Mary and St Peter, intercede on behalf of the royal couple with Christ. In the lower zone, the monks of the abbey also offer prayers for the king and the queen. Surrounded by heavenly rewards, sacred authorities and prayers, the royal couple becomes ideal candidates for salvation. The privileged elevation of the king and the queen above the rest of the monastic community and their proximity to the divine sphere suggests that their appeal for redemption may be heard by the divine authorities and the promise of salvation is further assured by the divine rewards.

The Last Judgement

Concern for salvation is also expressed in the Last Judgement line drawings, which follow in folios 6v and 7r, where St Peter and the Archangel Michael assume the leading roles in the fight for salvation (figs. 10-17). In folio 6v, a group of saints, martyrs with palm leaves, ecclesiastics and members of the laity, are led by two angels into Heaven (fig. 11). The two angels point the group towards St Peter on the facing page. In folio 7 in the top register, St Peter welcomes the saved to Heaven whereas the damned end up in Hade's jaws in the lower register (fig. 17). In the middle register, St Peter and an angel fight with a devil to save a human soul. The two open books, held by the angel and the devil respectively, are reminiscent of the two open books, held by Christ and the monk

in the prefatory miniature. The presence of the angels and the open books relate to the notion of salvation.

In the prefatory miniature, social hierarchy is conveyed through the division of space into three levels and the orderly and symmetrical placement of the figures according to their status. Accordingly, the top level is assigned to personages from the divine sphere, the middle register houses the royal couple and the cross, and the lower register is assigned to the monks. Moreover, the depiction of Queen Emma beneath the Virgin Mary and King Cnut beneath St Peter further suggests typological parallels between the saints and the royal couple.

Division of the space into three registers features also in the *Last Judgment*, drawn by the same artist, on folio 7r (fig. 14).⁶¹⁹ The registers facilitate the narrative by thematically linking the miniatures together. On folio 7r, the upper tier represents Heaven, the middle tier represents the area between Heaven and Hell, where the fight for a human soul takes place, and the lower register depicts Hell. In the upper tier, St Peter receives the righteous congregation from folio 6v into the heavenly city of Jerusalem, where Christ appears in a mandorla (fig. 15). In the middle tier, St Peter strikes a demon with his key in order to rescue a human soul while an angel stands next to the saint holding an open book. An open book is also held by the demon. On the right, a man and a woman are grabbed by another devil (fig. 16). In the lower tier, an angel locks up the damned in Hell, which is represented by the open mouth of a monster, the jaws of Hades (fig. 17).

⁶¹⁹ The main scribe and possibly the illuminator, was Ælsinus, a monk of the abbey in the first half of the eleventh century. See Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles* 2, (London, 1976), no. 78; David M. Wilson, *Anglo-Saxon Art: From the seventh century to the Norman Conquest* (Winchester, 1984), p. 184.

A very similar concept of Hell, with the head of the monster representing Hade's jaws, is depicted in the *Fall of the Rebel Angels* in Genesis, in Junius 11, produced in Christchurch, Canterbury, c.1000 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11, pp. 3, 16; figs. 18, 19) and in the *Harrowing of Hell*, in the Tiberius Psalter, produced in Winchester after 1064 (BL, Cotton MS Tiberius C.vi, fol. 14r; fig. 20).

Colour

In the prefatory miniature of the *Liber Vitae*, colour proves instrumental in emphasising the importance of the figures and the symbolic power of their attributes. The selective distribution of yellow, green and red on the figures, their attributes, and the inscriptions suggest a hierarchy in the use of colour. Dominant on the large cross—and resonant with symbolic connotations—yellow is the strongest colour in the composition, suggesting the gold of the original. Yellow features also on Christ's nimbus Cross and on the books held by Christ and the Virgin, denoting their importance (fig. 7). Paired green and red lines highlight Christ's mandorla, the haloes of the Virgin Mary and St Peter and the frame of the miniature. Red and green also feature on the inscriptions and on the hands of the cross.

In contrast to the upper and middle register, there is no colour at all in the lower register occupied by the monks. It seems that colour has been used with the purpose of linking the upper and the middle registers together, presenting them as one sacred space. At the same time, this contrasts to the monochromatic earthly environment of the monastic community, enclosed under the vault.

Status is also suggested with attire, gestures and juxtaposition in the size and pose of the figures. Gestures of blessing and prayer dominate the top register, with the Virgin Mary and St Peter interceding with God on behalf of the royal couple. Gestures of offering dominate the middle register, with the exchange of gifts between the angels and the royal couple. Gestures of intercession are also

employed by the monks on earth, interceding with their prayers for the royal couple. The symmetrical orchestration of gestures and poses intensifies the action and exalts the role of particular characters.

Moreover, in the upper zone, the quiet and peaceful atmosphere of the heavenly kingdom is conveyed by the stillness of the divine figures engaged in supervision and intercession. In this way, the tranquil mood in the zone of salvation and eternity contrasts with the action that takes place in the middle register, expressed with the exchange of gifts between the royal couple and the angels. Here the vigorous figures of the king and the queen with their right arms outstretched towards the cross and the flying angels gesturing towards Christ all carry the action of the narrative.

Only Christ and the large altar cross, directly below, are represented frontally in the composition. Christ is the only seated figure in the scene with the rest of the figures depicted standing in His presence. Symmetrically arranged, the rest of the divine, royal and monastic figures stand facing one another and flank respectively Christ in Majesty, the altar cross, and the monk with the open book at the bottom. The power of the earthly king and queen is further suggested through size: Cnut and Emma are the largest figures in the miniature. However, the king is drawn larger than the queen, who is set slightly back despite her feet being on the same plane.

The Angels

Hovering over the royal couple, the angels act as God's messengers; they deliver the divine gifts to the royal couple, fulfilling God's commands. The half drawn figures of the angels and the monks contrast with the fully drawn bodies of the rest of the figures in the scene and probably refer to their brief but crucial role

in the narrative: the angels as God's messengers and the choir monks as witnesses to the scene.

In medieval iconography, angels often appear with half-drawn bodies, highlighting their role as God's agents. Such representations also refer to the celestial origin of the angels, emphasising their ability to fly and deliver swiftly God's will to the people. For example, an eleventh-century outline drawing (BL, Cotton MS Caligula A. xv, fol. 122v) shows an angel delivering the Easter Tables to monk Pachomius (fig. 31). A similar scene, with Pachomius receiving the Easter Tables from an angel, is depicted in an outline drawing in the Arundel Psalter, dated from the first half of the eleventh century (Arundel MS 155, fol. 9v; fig. 30).

Similarly, in Byzantine art, angels are often depicted crowning imperial personages, warrior saints or monks, who excelled in their perseverance of faith.⁶²⁰ Their role in coronation scenes has its origin in Antique triumphal iconography. In the Theodore Psalter (BL, Additional MS 19352, fol. 21), an angel is depicted imposing a second crown on the head of Hezekiah, who, raised on a shield, is dressed as an emperor (fig. 119). The prefatory miniature in the Psalter of Basil II, c.1019 (Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, graec. 17, fol. III) shows the investiture of Basil II. The emperor is portrayed armoured, standing upon a *scabellum*, and being given a lance and invested with a crown by two flying angels while Christ above holds another crown over him (fig. 116).

Another miniature depicting a coronation by angels comes from John Chrysostom's Commentary on Matthew, dated from the mid-eleventh century (Mount Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinait. 364 (373) fol. 3; fig. 118). It

⁶²⁰ Christopher Walter, 'The Role of Angels in Coronation scenes' and 'Coronation by Angels in Byzantine Dedicatory Images', in *Prayer and Power in Byzantine and Papal Imagery*, (Variorum, 1993), pp. 190-8.

shows the standing figures of Constantine IX, in the middle, with his wife Zöe, and her sister Theodora, crowned, haloed and identified by inscriptions. Above the imperial figures, Christ in a mandorla and two flying angels hold crowns over their heads.

A final example is the dedicatory miniature from the Barberini Psalter, c.1092 (Vatican, Barberini graec. 372, fol. 1) which depicts Emperor Alexius I Comnenus, Empress Irene with, between them, their son John, all standing on *scabella* (fig. 117). Christ in a mandorla, above, holds a crown while three flying angels place crowns on the heads of the imperial figures. The emperor's crown is round surmounted by a small cross. The angel who holds it points with his left hand towards Christ in the mandorla above, employing the same gesture seen in the prefatory miniature of the *Liber Vitae* (fig. 7).

It becomes apparent that in all these examples of Byzantine miniatures, as in the *Liber Vitae*, the theme of coronation is dominant. The crowning of imperial figures symbolises God's sanction of the earthly ruler while the angels function as God's intermediaries in the deliverance of authority to the elect.

The Monks

Depicted half-length in *orans* stance, the monks in the introductory miniature of the *Liber Vitae* not only intercede with their prayers for the royal couple but they are also the only witnesses of the scene. In this respect, they will become the messengers of the miraculous event to the people, glorifying further the name of the king and the queen.

The size of the monks' truncated figures correspond to the shortened columns of the arcade: moving from the centre to the sides, the columns, together with the figures of the monks, become gradually shorter. In effect, each monk on the right and left end of the arcade has only his head drawn in profile view, which

may suggest that the artist is attempting to suggest a hierarchy in the monastic community. Arguably, the monk with the open book in the middle of the arcade is the most important figure in the group, not only because he holds the book but also because he is placed centrally, a position of honour. The abridged depiction of the angels, the monks and the church's interior contributes also to a maximum economy of space. Furthermore, the selective enlargement and shortening of figures allows the artist to deliver with clarity the hierarchy of the Anglo-Saxon Christian society within the limits of the pictorial plane.

The semicircular vault, on which the royal couple stand, creates a certain ambiguity since it is not clear what the artist intended to suggest. The royal couple and the cross on the altar seem rather unstable on the upper surface of the vault, as if they are suspended between the divine sphere and the church below. Most likely, the artist sought to separate the space between the royal couple and the monks and to elevate the royal couple into a higher sphere.

Similar semicircular vaults appear in Junius 11 in the *Spirit Brooding on the Waters* in the second day of Creation (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11, p. 6) (fig. 24). The same vaults are repeated on the *Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Day of Creation* depicted on page 7 (fig. 25). Here, the semicircular vaults are placed one on top of the other; presumably a device for defining the space between paradise and earth or showing different stages in Creation.⁶²¹ In Junius 11, the lower semicircular vault, on page 6, represents the earth. Assuming that the semicircular vault in *Liber Vitae* represents the earth, the depiction of the royal couple, standing

⁶²¹ *The Cædmon Manuscript of Anglo-Saxon Biblical Poetry, Junius 11 in the Bodleian Library*, ed., Israel Gollancz (London, 1927), pp. x1-x1ii.; and Bernard J. Muir, ed., *A Digital Facsimile of Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Junius 11*, Bodleian Library Digital Texts 1 (Oxford, 2004).

on top of it, shows the royal supremacy in both the Christian Church and the world.

Standing under their arcaded vault, the monks verify the scene of the royal donation and the immediate divine reward, which takes place above them. Being the only onlookers of an historical event, which culminated in a miraculous divine intervention, the monks are depicted as eager to be witnesses to the scene. By showing the heads of three more monks gathering on either side of the central arch, the artist skilfully hints at the large number of the brethren waiting to enter the sanctuary.

The role of the monks in the introductory miniature is very important because they stand as witnesses of a historical event and verify the scene. The inclusion of New Minster monks interceding with prayers for the royal couple suggests also Cnut's positive attitude to the Christian Church. It also reminds us of the *Regularis Concordia* frontispiece, dating from the eleventh century (BL, MS Cotton Tiberius A. iii, fol. 2v) where King Edgar is depicted seated with his two preferred prelates, Dunstan and Æthelwold (fig. 37).

The depiction of the New Minster monks in the lower register stresses the close relationship between the royal couple and the monastic foundation of Winchester (fig. 9). It also suggests the monastic involvement in the production of the manuscript since the main scribe, and possibly the illuminator of the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, was Ælfsige (Ælsinus), a monk and priest of the New Minster abbey.⁶²² Ælfsige became bishop of Winchester when Æthelwold 'the Younger'

⁶²² Catherine Karkov, 'Ælfgifu and Cnut in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*', in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004, p. 121; The name of the scribe, Ælfsige, a monk and priest

died in 1015. By the time of Ælfsige's death, in 1023, he had witnessed all of Cnut's charters.⁶²³ Additionally, his successor, bishop Ælfwine, one of Cnut's chapel priests, witnessed all of the remaining charters in Cnut's reign.⁶²⁴ Moreover, ecclesiastics of the Winchester monastic community appear on fol. 6v (figs. 10, 11). The two prelates in front of the group of the elect have been interpreted as being Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester (the one wearing the pallium) and Abbot Æthelgarus of the New Minster, whose name appears near the left side of the page (figs. 12, 13).⁶²⁵

3.2 The Militant King

The only surviving representations of King Cnut come from the New Minster prefatory miniature and his coins. Neither source offers a realistic portrait of the king, only a royal image. In the New Minster *Liber Vitae* prefatory miniature, the king is depicted with a full moustache, closely trimmed beard, and hair coming down to his neck. The crown on his head, his luxurious garments and the sword reveal his royal status. The king wears the characteristic knee-length Anglo-Saxon tunic, leggings held by dotted bands and a long cloak, with an elaborate band,

who also wrote Ælfwine's prayerbook in c.1023-35 (BL, Cotton MS Titus D. xxvii), appears on one of its pages.

⁶²³ His succession was not included in the ASC, probably because so much else was happening in that year. His succession was recorded by John of Worcester. See *The Chronicle of John of Worcester: The Annals from 450-1066*, eds., Reginald R. Darlington and Patrick McGurk and Jennifer Bray trans. 2 vols. Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 1995-8), s.a. 1015.

⁶²⁴ The archbishops of Canterbury were the only other church leaders who witnessed as many of Cnut's charters as the bishops of Winchester; see also Lawrence M. Larson, *Canute the Great 995 (circ.)1035: And the Rise of Danish Imperialism During the Viking Age* (New York, 1912), p. 312.

⁶²⁵ The name Ælgarus, written on the left of the page, refers possibly Ælfgar or Æthelgar, Abbot of New Minster (965), Bishop of Selsey (980) and Archbishop of Canterbury (988); see Gerchow 1992, p. 219; E. O. Blake, ed. *Liber Eliensis* (London, 1962), p. 153.

fastened with two ribbons ending in square tags. A description of Cnut comes from the thirteenth-century *Knýtlinga saga*:

Knutr was exceptionally tall and strong, and the handsomest of men, all except for his nose, that was thin, high-set, and rather hooked. He had a fair complexion none-the-less, and a fine, thick head of hair. His eyes were better than those of other men, both the handsomer and the keener of their sight.⁶²⁶

Knut was a son of the Danish King Svein. He became king of England in 1016, king of Denmark in 1019 and after 1028 he reigned over Norway and major parts of Sweden.⁶²⁷ When the *Liber Vitae* of the New Minster was produced, in 1030/1031, King Cnut already had all these kingdoms under his command.

In 1017 Cnut married Queen Emma/Ælfgifu of Norman/Danish origins and the widow of King Æthelred II. The marriage was considered a great political manoeuvre on Cnut's part.⁶²⁸ With the queen of the former King Æthelred by his side, Cnut guaranteed for himself a safe introduction into the political and ecclesiastical subtleties of a foreign country. Cnut's marriage also reduced possible political demands by Richard, Duke of Normandy, brother of Emma, on behalf of

⁶²⁶ H. Pálsson and P. Edwards, trans., *Knýtlinga Saga: The History of the Kings of Denmark* (Odense, 1986).

⁶²⁷ Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror' (1992) p. 219; Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1971), p. 404. The ASC under the year 1028 mentions that 'Cnut went with fifty ships of English thengs from England to Norway, and drove King Olaf from that country, and acquired it for himself'. See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 230.

⁶²⁸ ASC 1017: 'before the Kalends of August, the king commanded the relict of king Ethelred, Richard's daughter, to be fetched for his wife; that was Elfgive in English, Emma in French'. See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 227; Before Emma, Cnut had a relationship with Ælfgifu 'of Northumbria', daughter of Ælfhelm once earl of Northumbria. In 1030 Cnut chose her as regent of Norway on behalf of their son Swein. See Frank Stenton *Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1971), p. 397.

Edward and Alfred, the sons of King Æthelred and Emma, in exile in Normandy under the protection of the duke. Anglo-Saxon literary sources do not provide any information concerning Cnut's coronation in England. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives an account of his conquest of England.⁶²⁹ And again in the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* there is an account of Cnut's arrival in England.⁶³⁰

Cnut was a very successful king. In the *Liber Vitae* prefatory miniature, the artist carefully conveys the king's vigour and royal grandeur. Cnut is the larger figure in the composition. He is portrayed bigger than the queen even with his knees bent more than hers. The king is depicted closer to the foreground than the queen, who stands slightly in the background without any offering in her hands. Holding onto the large gold cross with his right hand and his sword with the left, Cnut is depicted as a dynamic and strong king. His pose is energetic and full of vitality. The sense of animated movement is emphasised by one of the king's ribbons that touches the frame, and by his sword that crosses right over it. Here is a larger than life King Cnut holding the cross and his invincible sword.

Queen Emma is here to enhance the glory of the king and is the only royal witness to the scene. Although Emma's inclusion in the picture and her position

⁶²⁹ ASC 1015 Canute 'came to Sandwich, and then turned at once round Kent into Wessex, until he reached the mouth of the Frome, and ravaged then in Dorset, in Wiltshire and in Somerset'. See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 225.

⁶³⁰ [T]here were so many kinds of shields, that you could have believed that troops of all nations were present...Gold shone on the prows, silver also flashed on the variously shaped ships...For who could look upon the lions of the foe, terrible with the brightness of gold, who upon the men of metal, menacing with golden face...who upon the bulls on the ships threatening death, their horns shining with gold, without feeling any fear for the king of such a force? Furthermore, in this great expedition there was present no slave, no man freed from slavery, no low-born man, no man weakened by age; for all were noble, all strong with the might of mature age, all sufficiently fit for any type of fighting, all of such great fleetness, that they scorned the speed of horsemen.' See *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, ed., A. Campbell [1949], with Supplementary Introduction by Simon Keynes, Camden Classic Reprints 4 (Cambridge, 1998).

below the Virgin Mary undoubtedly reveals her power as an Anglo-Saxon queen, everything in the picture is orchestrated so as to glorify the name of the king rather than hers. Emma holds her robes up in the Byzantine gesture of a Virgin, depicted thus as born again Virgin.

3.2.1 The arched crown and the helmet

In the *Encomium Emma Reginae*, Cnut is described as a great politician.⁶³¹ Undoubtedly, Cnut's political agility was one the main reasons for his successful rule in a foreign country. The king introduced a new political structure by the division of the land into four great earldoms. Moreover, his confirmation of Edgar's laws, that is to say, the tradition of English law and kingship, proved a very wise political decision and one that helped Cnut persuade the English to acknowledge him as their king.⁶³² In politics, he not only adopted Edgar's law but, like Edgar, he surrounded himself with very able ecclesiastics, who were ready to compile laws and help him in the matters of the state. It has been suggested that Ælfric and Wulfstan were responsible for the welfare of the English Church during the reign of Cnut. Wulfstan played a significant role in England during the reigns of both Æthelred and Cnut.⁶³³ The homilistic tone of Cnut's law codes

⁶³¹ Michael Lawson, *Cnut: the Danes in England in the Early Eleventh Century* (London, 1993), p. 64; *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, ed., A. Campbell and S. Keynes (Cambridge, 1998), p. 17.

⁶³² Jan Gerchow 'Prayers for King Cnut', p. 219.

⁶³³ Wulfstan, bishop of London from 966 until 1002 and archbishop of York from 1002 until his death in 1023, was responsible for the formulation of the series of law codes issued by Æthelred II, most likely between the years 1008 and 1014. For many years, however, the prevailing opinion among scholars was that the code of Cnut, which borrowed extensively from the 1008 code of Æthelred, was not produced until after Wulfstan died. The opinion was based on arguments set out by Liebermann in his article on relations between Wulfstan's and Cnut's code-making. Liebermann believed that Cnut's code must have followed his proclamation of 1027. For a discussion of Wulfstan's authority of Cnut's Laws, see Alan G. Kennedy, 'Cnut's law code of 1018', *ASE* 11 (1982), pp. 57-81, and F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, vol. I (Halle, 1903), pp.

shows that most probably they had been drafted by Archbishop Wulfstan of York, who had also produced codes for King Æthelred, therefore there were no significant differences between them.⁶³⁴

During his nineteen-year reign, King Cnut struck three substantive issues of coins.⁶³⁵ The title of the king on these issues is *Cnut Rex*, with or without *Anglorum*.⁶³⁶ Cnut continued the Anglo-Saxon coinage system, but with two of his three English coin types departing from the traditional sub-Roman images. King Cnut introduced for the first time issues with a crown having the royal bust facing to the left, and also issues with a peaked helmet as a reminder of his military success.⁶³⁷ In his coinage the cross on the reverse becomes more elaborate. The obverse of some coins shows a long bust with the hand holding a sceptre while a cross with four jewels features on the reverse. Here, the royal bust is more detailed and sometimes longer, including arm, hand, and sceptre. Other coins feature the bust with a sceptre facing to the right and a cross in a voided quatrefoil frame on the reverse.⁶³⁸

278-371. On its authorship, see Dorothy Whitelock, *EHR* lxiii (1948), pp. 433-52, lxix (1954), pp. 72-85.

⁶³⁴ The preface refers to the religious duties of the clergy and laity and to the aim of securing the maintenance of ecclesiastical interests. See Stenton, p. 409; Liebermann, *Gesetze*, I, pp. 278-371. On the authorship of Cnut's laws, see D. Whitelock, *EHR* lxiii (1948), pp. 433-52, lxix (1954), pp. 72-85; M. K. Lawson, 'Archbishop Wulfstan and the Homiletic Element in the Laws of Æthelred II and Cnut', *The English Historical Review* 107 (424) (1992), pp. 565-86; D. Whitelock 'Wulfstan's authorship of Cnut's Laws', *English Historical Review*, 70 (1955), pp. 72-85.

⁶³⁵ Michael R. H. Dolley, *Anglo-Saxon Coins* (London, 1961), p. 152; Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley, (London, 1961), pp. 136-68; King Cnut (1016-1035).

⁶³⁶ For images of Cnut with a crown and a peaked helmet, see George Brooke, *English Coins* pl. xvi, 12, 13.

⁶³⁷ George Brooke, *English Coins*, pp. 68-69.

⁶³⁸ Some of Cnut's issues follow the Æthelred's types with bust to the left. There is one issue with long bust to left with sceptre (pl. xvi 14). Another type bears long bust to the left with hand holding sceptre (pl. xvi 15). The issue with bust to left without sceptre has on the reverse a long cross voided with trefoil or fleurs (pl. xvi 16) See George Brooke, *English Coins*.

Cnut's first issue, c.1017-1023, is the *Quatrefoil* with the crowned bust of king facing to the left in quatrefoil (fig. 194).⁶³⁹ The first issue shows Cnut wearing a crown similar to those pictured in late Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. The second issue, c.1024-1030, portrays the king wearing the characteristic helmet worn by Anglo-Saxons, Normans, and Vikings in the eleventh century (fig. 193).

As in all late Anglo-Saxon coins, the legend of King Cnut's issues starts with a cross followed by the title of the king. For the first time in late Anglo-Saxon manuscript illumination, this practice can be seen repeated on the inscription of Cnut's title in the prefatory miniature of the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, where only the king's name appears next to the golden cross.

The arched crown

The *Liber Vitae* prefatory miniature is the only surviving image of King Cnut wearing an arched crown. Cnut's depictions on coins show the Anglo-Saxon king in profile wearing a lily crown or a peaked helmet.⁶⁴⁰ Moreover, no other Anglo-Saxon king is depicted with an arched crown. On coins, King Æthelstan wears a simple, pronged metal-ring crown, similar to the one in the *Vita Sancti Cuthberti* miniature. King Edgar in the New Minster Charter wears a lily crown. Cnut's arched crown has been interpreted as a sign of the king's imperial aspirations.⁶⁴¹ It suggests iconographic influence from Ottonian imperial crowns,

⁶³⁹ For the weight of King Æthelstan coinage, see V. J. Butler 'The Metrology of the Late Anglo-Saxon Penny', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed., R. H. M. Dolley (London, 1961) p. 210-11.

⁶⁴⁰ Symbol of leadership in battle, the gold helmet was the early German crown; see W. A. Chaney, *The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester, 1970), p. 139.

⁶⁴¹ See P. E. Schramm, 'Die Kronen des frühen Mittelalters', in *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik*, (Stuttgart, 1954-56) vol. II, pp. 377-417; esp., 393; Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', in Carola Hicks, ed., *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1992), p. 227; Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*,

which feature an arch.⁶⁴² For example, Christ crowns Henry II with an arched crown in the Bamberg Sacramentary (München, Staatsbibliothek, cod. Lat. 4456, fol. 11r; fig. 112).⁶⁴³

In the *Liber Vitae*, only King Cnut receives a crown as divine reward while Emma is just given a veil. It should be noted that no contemporary or later source refers to Cnut's coronation as king of England.⁶⁴⁴ And yet, he is the only Anglo-Saxon king depicted being crowned by a divine agent. Although the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives the account of the coronation of Edgar, Æthelred, Edward the Confessor and William the Conqueror, it makes no reference to King Cnut's coronation and mentions only his election and acclamation.⁶⁴⁵

The new coronation *ordo*, known as the 'second' English *ordo*, was introduced in the tenth century imitating coronation models from the Continent. In the coronation liturgy of the second *ordo*, used for Edgar's coronation, the word *corona* is mentioned for the first time. During the coronation ceremony, the king, kneeling at the altar steps, was invested with crown, sceptre and sword, the most

p. 137; The crown which had been made for the coronation of William the Conqueror in 1066 was also an arched crown with twelve jewels, to which Schramm attributes imperial aspirations as well. See P. E. Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik* (Stuttgart, 1954-56) vol. II, pp. 377-417 and at p. 393; Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', p. 227.

⁶⁴² 'Reichskrone' (Ottonian imperial crown), Vienna, Schatzkammer. See Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', in Carola Hicks, ed., *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1992), p. 226.

⁶⁴³ Percy E. Schramm, *Die deutschen Kaiser*, cat. No. 124; Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut' 1992, p. 227.

⁶⁴⁴ E. B. Fryde et al., *Handbook of British Chronology*, (London, 1986), p. 28. Pauline Stafford believes that Cnut's second law code ch. 69-83 refers to a coronation charter of 1016-17. See Pauline Stafford 'The Laws of King Cnut and the History of Anglo-Saxon Royal Promises', *ASE* 10 (1982), pp. 173-90. This seems possible, but it is quite perplexing that neither the ASC nor any other reliable source says anything about a coronation of Cnut.

⁶⁴⁵ Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', p. 219.

potent symbols of royal power.⁶⁴⁶ At the coronation ceremony, an Anglo-Saxon king, endowed with sacred power by the Archbishop of Canterbury, became God's anointed, like the kings of Israel. The anointed king was regarded as superior to all his subjects, including churchmen.⁶⁴⁷ The crown was a reminder of the divine origin of kingship and the divine blessing by the eternal king to the earthly king.

Several Ottonian miniatures show the king or emperor being crowned by Christ, the Virgin Mary or saints. In the Sacramentary of the Bishop Warmund, c.1000 (Ivrea, Biblioteca Capitolare, Cod. Lxxxvi, fol. 160v) the Virgin Mary crowns Otto III (fig. 113). In a Carolingian miniature from a Sacramentary fragment, written in Metz, c. 869 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 1141), Charles the Bald, standing between (?) saints Gelasius and Gregory, is crowned by the Hand of God (fig. 111).

In the *Crowning of Henry II by Christ*, from the Sacramentary of Henry II, written in Regensburg, c.1002-14 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4456, fol. 11) two flying angels invest the emperor with a long sword on the left hand and a lance on the right (fig. 112). The sword is clearly part of a coronation ceremony and similarly to Cnut, Henry II holds it in his left hand. In the Bamberg Apocalypse, c.1001-2 (Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, MS Bibl. 140, fol. 59v) Otto III, enthroned, is crowned by Saints Peter and Paul (fig. 108). In the Aachen Gospels, c.996 (Aachen, Cathedral Treasury, Clm. 4453, fol. 16) the emperor seated in majesty is crowned by the Hand of God (fig. 107).

⁶⁴⁶ Other important Anglo-Saxon royal insignia were the throne, the banner, the staff, the harp and the ring; John Steane, *Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy* (Routledge, 1999) p. 13.

⁶⁴⁷ John Steane, *Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy* (Routledge, 1999), p. 13.

Christianity was a significant factor in the growing importance of the crown. Under Christian influence, the Lombard kings and the Visigoths offered their crowns to God. The Lombard kings hung votive crowns in the cathedral at Monza. The giving of votive crowns was also a common practice in the German empire. Emperor Henry II's gift of a crown and insignia to Cluny is only one of many examples.⁶⁴⁸

There is no evidence of crown donations being part of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. King Cnut, however, has been mentioned as giving crowns to churches. The king is recorded as having offered his golden crown to Christchurch, Canterbury, in 1023. After he had placed the crown on a crucifix, he never wore it again *sed super imaginem Domini, quae cruci affixa erat, posuit eam in aeternum, in laudem Dei Regis magni*.⁶⁴⁹ It is also mentioned that Cnut gave his crown to Winchester but the account is of a later date and, possibly, not very reliable.⁶⁵⁰

⁶⁴⁸ Joachim Wollasch, 'Kaiser Heinrich II in Cluny', *FS* 3 (1969), pp. 327-42, esp. at p. 327. Schramm lists many more examples. See P. E. Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen, und Staatssymbolik*, (Stuttgart, 1954-6). However, Schramm does not include in the list the donation of Cnut's crown to Canterbury. See Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', in Carola Hicks, ed., *England in the Eleventh Century*, (Stamford, 1992), p. 228.

⁶⁴⁹ King Cnut in A.D. 1023 placed his golden *kinehelm* 'with [his] own hands upon the altar of Christ in Canterbury' at Christchurch Cathedral and there it was kept *in capite crucis majoris in navi ejusdem ecclesiae*. The evidence is given by a charter in P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: an Annotated List and Bibliography* (London, 1968). See also A. J. Robertson, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (Cambridge, 1939), pp. 158, 407; Catherine Karkov, 'The Figure of the Queen', in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 125; Thomas Heslop, 'The Production of *de luxe* Manuscripts and the Patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma' *ASE* 19 (1990), p. 189; Thomas Arnold, ed., *History of the English*, p. 189; William A. Chaney, *The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England* (Manchester, 1970), p. 139.

⁶⁵⁰ See *Henrici archidiaconi Huntendunensis Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold, RS (London, 1879), p. 189; Diana Greenway, ed., *Henry of Huntingdon, Historia Anglorum: The History of the English People*, (Oxford, 1966); Robert Deshman, 'Christus rex et magi reges: Kinship and Christology in Ottonian and Anglo-Saxon Art', *FS* 22 (1976), pp. 404-5; T. Heslop, 'The Production of *de luxe* Manuscripts and the Patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma', p. 184.

In March 1027, Cnut travelled to Rome to attend the imperial coronation of the German Emperor Conrad II at Easter. The emperor had an arched crown prepared for the ceremony.⁶⁵¹ Furthermore, the arched crown of Henry II was above the altar in St Peter's.⁶⁵² This suggests that King Cnut may have seen both crowns when in Rome. The imperial connotations suggested by the king's arched crown can be justified by his great military achievements, since by 1030 Cnut was not only the king of England and Denmark but he also reigned over Norway and a large part of Sweden.

The arched crown has been interpreted as the eternal crown, a reward for eternal life and, therefore, closely related to salvation.⁶⁵³ An arched crown appears in the *Pentecost* outline drawing of an Anglo-Saxon psalter, c.1050 (BL, Cotton MS Tiberius C.vi, fol. 15v) (fig. 72).⁶⁵⁴ The apostle on the right holds an arched crown, which may suggest the eternal one, received as a reward for a pious life.

Another arched crown features in the Death and Coronation of the Virgin in the Benedictional of St Æthelwold, written in Winchester, c.971-984 (BL, Additional MS 49598, fol. 102v; fig. 67). The Virgin Mary lies in a bed with the Hand of God appearing over her head holding an arched crown. According to Robert Deshman, the arched crown received by the Virgin Mary is the eternal

⁶⁵¹ After the coronation, Cnut and the Duke Rudolf of Burgundy accompanied the emperor to his chambers. For Cnut's journey to Rome, see also Harry Bresslau, *Jahrbücher des Deutschen Reiches unter Konrad II.*, I (Leipzig, 1879), pp. 139ff.; H. Appelt, ed., *Die Regesten des Kaiserreiches unter Konrad II.*, 1024-39, *Regesta Imperii III* (Graz, 1951), no. 73c, and *Diplomatarium Danicum*, no. 422; Conrad had altered the Ottonian Imperial crown by adding on the arch his name and title, fashioned in pearls. See J. Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', pp. 226-7; CHUONRADUS DEIGRATIA ROMANORU(M) IMPERATOR AUG(USTUS). See also P. E. Schramm and F. Mütterich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser: Ein Beitrag zur Herrschergeschichte von Karl dem Großen bis Friedrich II 768-1250* (München, 1962), cat., no. 146.

⁶⁵² P. E. Schramm and F. Mütterich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser*, pt.1, pp. 374-375.

⁶⁵³ Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 137.

⁶⁵⁴ Francis Wormald, *English Drawings of the Tenth and Eleventh centuries* (London, 1952), pl. 31.

crown, a divine reward for her righteous life.⁶⁵⁵ The same arched crown is depicted in a very similar miniature of the Death and Coronation of the Virgin from the Rouen Benedictional, dated from the mid-eleventh-century (Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS Y. 7 (369), fol. 54v; fig. 68).

Robert Deshman has stressed that the series of crowns appearing in several miniatures in the Benedictional of Æthelwold suggest a strong royal influence in the iconography.⁶⁵⁶ Crowns are shown in *The Choir of Confessors* with St Benedict, St Gregory and St Cuthbert (fol. 1), *The Choir of Virgins* (ff. 1v-2), *The Adoration of the Magi* (fol. 24v) (fig. 63), *St Benedict* (fol. 99v) (fig. 62) and *The Death and Coronation of the Virgin* (fol. 102v) (fig. 67). Worn by sacred or divine figures, these crowns symbolise holiness and virtue but they also stand as a reminder of kingship on earth, where the crown is worn only by Christ's anointed one: the earthly king.

Accordingly, the arched crown placed on Cnut's head, apart from imperial connotations, possibly symbolises the eternal reward for a virtuous Christian king and the promise of salvation. It is the divine reward for the king's victory in battle, territorial expansion and his pious and virtuous conduct. In this way the arched crown is consistent with Cnut's imperial and spiritual aspirations.

3.2.2 'A Saxon sword with a golden scabbard' ⁶⁵⁷

As befits a great conqueror, in the prefatory miniature of the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, Cnut is depicted holding a sword, a symbol of law and justice.⁶⁵⁸ The

⁶⁵⁵ Robert Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold* (Princeton, 1975), p. 83-92.

⁶⁵⁶ Robert Deshman, 'The Royal program and the historical background', in *The Iconography of the full-page miniatures of the Benedictional of Æthelwold* (Princeton, 1975), pp. 209-239.

⁶⁵⁷ William of Malmesbury tells us that King Alfred recognised Æthelstan as his heir and invested him as a warrior (miles) at a very young age giving him, 'a scarlet coat, a jewelled belt, and a Saxon sword with a gold scabbard'. See W. Stubbs, ed., William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, RS (1887-9), i, 133; Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *EHD*, i, p. 279.

sword is a reminder of Cnut's military and political achievements. The king is depicted below St Peter who stands holding a large key in his left hand. Cnut's active pose mirrors that of St Peter in the *Last Judgment* (fol. 7r) (fig. 16) where the saint, after introducing the elect to heaven in the upper register, fights with a devil over a human soul in the middle register. A parallel can be drawn between St Peter's key, the key of paradise, and King Cnut's sword, symbol of justice. In folio 7r, the saint takes his key in his right hand and uses it as a weapon to strike a devil on the head (fig. 16). Thus, both the key and the sword become powerful weapons in the battle between good and evil, as well as symbols of Christian power and authority.

An outline drawing in Junius 11 (Oxford, Bodleian Library, p. 57) shows the biblical patriarch Cainan enthroned holding a sword, which has been interpreted as the sword of justice (fig. 123). Cainan is depicted crowned as *aldordema*, that is, a supreme lord.⁶⁵⁹ In addition, one of Cainan's soldiers holds a sword with a trilobite pommel similar to Cnut's, which may underline the power associated with the sword.⁶⁶⁰

Cnut's vigorous pose suggests that he will defend and honour the cross with his sword and that he has the power and legitimacy to do so. The king's hand on the hilt, in particular, suggests a gesture of a solemn oath. There are references to the hilt of the sword in connection with the swearing of oaths, which go back to

⁶⁵⁸ Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 135-136.

⁶⁵⁹ Israel Gollancz, ed., *The Cædmon Manuscript of Anglo-Saxon Biblical Poetry*, Junius 11 in the Bodleian Library (London, 1927) and Bernard J. Muir, ed., *A Digital Facsimile of Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Junius 11*, Bodleian Library Digital Texts 1 (Oxford, 2004).

⁶⁶⁰ Catherine Karkov, 'Text and Picture in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Pictorial Narrative of Genesis* (Cambridge, 2001), pl. XXVI, p. 57.

the Teutonic people before they converted to Christianity.⁶⁶¹ Furthermore, in medieval Germany, when the bride and the groom had to take the oath of fidelity, they placed their hands on the hilt of a sword. Another custom in the wedding ceremony included the presentation of the wedding-ring to the bride upon the hilt of a sword.⁶⁶² Certainly the oath of allegiance stresses the importance of the sword as symbol of royal power. In the Norwegian Court of Law, a man entering the king's service had to take the oath of allegiance by touching the hilt of the king's sword and then swearing loyalty to him.⁶⁶³

The introduction of the sword to swearing-in ceremonies suggests that the sword was very significant in a man's life. For example, Charles the Great always wore a sword with a 'hilt and belt of either gold or silver' and, on special occasions, he wore a jewelled sword.⁶⁶⁴ Similarly, in 853, the four year old King Alfred was sent to Rome by his father, King Æthelwulf of Wessex, to receive the blessing of Pope Leo IV.⁶⁶⁵ Part of the blessing ceremony was the girding of a sword. Two years later, Alfred returned to Rome with his father bearing precious gifts for the Pope, including a splendid sword.⁶⁶⁶

William of Malmesbury mentions that King Alfred was very proud of his grandson Æthelstan and for this reason invested him at a premature age with 'a

⁶⁶¹ Hilda R. E. Davidson, *The Sword in Anglo-Saxon England: Its Archaeology and Literature* (Oxford, 1962), p. 185.

⁶⁶² In the eleventh-century Latin poem *Ruodlieb* see G. W. Grocock, ed. and trans., *Ruodlieb*, (Warminster, 1985).

⁶⁶³ *Hirðskraa, Norges Gamle Love* (Keyser and Munch, 1848), ii, p. 422. See also L. M. Larson 'The Household of the Norwegian Kings', *American Historical Review*, xiii, 1908, p. 60.

⁶⁶⁴ Arthur J. Grant, ed. and trans., 1966. *Early Lives of Charlemagne by Einhard and the Monk of St Gall* (London, 1966), p. 152.

⁶⁶⁵ The ASC 853, Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 174.

⁶⁶⁶ Duchesne, ed. *Le Liber Pontificalis: Texte, introduction et commentaire* (Paris, 1886-92), ii, p. 148; R. Davis, *The Lives of the Ninth-Century Popes (Liber Pontificalis): The Ancient Biographies of Ten Popes from AD 817-891* (Liverpool, 1995).

scarlet cloak, a jewelled belt, and a Saxon sword with a golden scabbard.'⁶⁶⁷ Another sword mentioned by William of Malmesbury relates to Constantine the Great. It is said that the Frankish Duke Hugh, planning to marry Æthelstan's daughter, sent the king, among other luxurious presents, the sword of Constantine the Great.⁶⁶⁸ The drawing of *The Constellations of Orion and Canis* (BL, Harley MS 2506, fol. 41), dated to the last quarter of the tenth century, shows Orion with a sword (fig. 122). Orion has taken his sword out from the scabbard and holds it up in his right hand. The hilt of his sword features a trilobite pommel with protruding central lobe very similar to the pommel of Cnut's sword in the *Liber Vitae* prefatory miniature.

In the Anglo-Saxon period, the sword was not only the most precious weapon of a leader but it also had a very important ceremonial value. The kings had a special sword for their coronation and other significant occasions. As already mentioned, in the 'second' English *ordo*, introduced in the tenth century, the sword was integral part of the coronation ceremony, as, for example, in the *Crowning of Henry II by Christ* from the Sacramentary of Henry II (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4456, fol. 11), where one of the flying angels invests Henry II with a sword (fig. 112).

3.3 The Queen and the Virgin Mary

3.3.1 The Veiled Queen

Born in Normandy in the 980s, Emma was the daughter of Richard I, count of Rouen, and his second wife Gunnor, of the 'noblest house of the Danes'. The

⁶⁶⁷ William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, i. 133 ed. W. Stubbs, RS (London, 1887-9) i, 133; *EHD.*, ed. D. Whitelock, i, p. 279.

⁶⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, i. 135, *E.H.D.* I, p. 282.

name she was given was a Frankish dynastic name. When she married King Æthelred II in 1002, she was given the English name Ælfigifu.⁶⁶⁹ Her first marriage to Æthelred II has been interpreted as a political device to protect England from further Viking attacks.⁶⁷⁰ Her second marriage to Cnut helped the foreign king to establish an English identity and to protect his throne from any future threats posed by the exiled æthelings, Edward and Alfred. Queen Emma bore two children to Cnut and her position next to him was much stronger than in her previous marriage. This is evident since her public profile in patronage and charter witness-lists is higher than that of any earlier English queen.

Queen Emma is depicted wearing a diadem, and not a crown, beneath her headdress. In Antiquity, the diadem was a band ornamented with pearls or with lappets and a large jewel in front.⁶⁷¹ The crown was a circlet made of leaves or flowers, natural or copied in precious metal. In Antiquity and later in early Christian iconography, the diadem was a symbol of imperial status while the crown, apart from the marriage crown, was a reward for success in battle and, at the same time, the reward of eternal life. The Romans, renowned for their military prowess, favoured the crown and disliked the diadem because it was the symbol of royalty par excellence. In Roman triumphal ceremonies, a crown was held over the head of a *triumphatus* or presented to the emperor who would then wear it on ceremonial occasions.⁶⁷² In the *Adventus scene*, the Kersch plate (Leningrad, Hermitage) the emperor wears a diadem, while the angel of victory, preceding

⁶⁶⁹ Catherine Karkov, 'Ælfigu/Emma and Cnut', Karkov, in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 123-33, at 120.

⁶⁷⁰ Emma bore three children by Æthelred, including Alfred and Edward. It was the first time since the mid-ninth century that an English king had married a foreigner.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.* II 1, 11-121 (Diadema).

⁶⁷² *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*, I 2, eds. C. Daremberg and E. Saglio, (Paris, 1887-1918) pp. 1520-37.

him, carries a crown (fig. 114).⁶⁷³ The diadem here is the sign of imperial status while the crown is the reward of success in battle. The distinction, however, between the royal diadem and the crown of victory, which is clear in Antiquity, subsequently becomes blurred.⁶⁷⁴

Emma's diadem, similar to the one worn by Mary in the picture of the 'Quinity' in Ælfwine's prayerbook, c.1023-35 (BL, Cotton MS. Titus D. xxvii, fol. 75) stresses further the association between the two women (fig. 40). The only difference is that the Virgin wears the diadem over her head covering. In the frontispiece of the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, (BL, MS Additional 33241, fol. 1v) produced for Emma in 1041-2, probably by a monk from the Saint-Bertin monastery in Flanders, the queen is depicted enthroned wearing a lily crown, not a diadem (fig. 36). A monk, presumably the author of the book, kneels before her holding an open book. The two young crowned royal figures, on the right, have been interpreted as Emma's sons Harthacnut and Edward.⁶⁷⁵ It can be suggested that the choice of a diadem, rather than a crown, for the queen in the *Liber Vitae*, was carefully considered. A second crown in the scene would have diminished the splendour of Cnut's arched crown. And, since Cnut holding the large cross and the sword is designed to be the main protagonist of the scene, his divine reward is not only more conspicuous than Emma's but it is also a direct reference to the divine origin of the earthly kingship.

In the miniature, Queen Emma/Ælfgifu is depicted below the Virgin Mary under the right arm the cross. The queen's figure is modelled on the Virgin Mary,

⁶⁷³ Alisa Bank, *Vizantiiskoe iskusstvo* (Leningrad/Moscow, 1969), no 1, p. 277.

⁶⁷⁴ Christopher Walter, *Prayer and Power in Byzantine and Papal Imagery* (Variorum, 1993), p. 189.

⁶⁷⁵ See *Encomium Emmae*, ed. A. Campbell and S. Keynes, pp. xlv-xlv and Ixix; Catherine Karkov, 'Emma and the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*' in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 146-55.

who stands in a hunched posture, her hand, overlapping the mandorla, almost touching that of Christ, Emma below, stretching out her arm towards the cross, her hand almost touching Cnut's hand holding onto the cross. Drawn smaller than the king and pushed slightly into the background, Emma assumes the role of the virtuous and modest Christian queen: she sets herself a step back from the king, leaving him invested wholly with the glory of the donation.

The veil, which Emma receives from the angel, forms a canopy, like a halo, over her head. It seems that the queen—the earthly queen as opposed to Mary the heavenly queen—is crowned with a veil, whereas the king receives an actual crown. Emma's veil has been interpreted as the *stola secunda*, that is to say, the veil of the blessed that crowns the eternal soul.⁶⁷⁶ This interpretation agrees with the salvation overtones which feature in all three line drawings of the *Liber Vitae*. The *secunda stola*, as veil of the blessed, would be in perfect harmony with the eternal crown received by the king, as both divine rewards are closely related to salvation and presumably stand as a promise of salvation.

Emma's modesty notwithstanding, her role in the narrative is not diminished. To begin with, her conspicuous presence on the right of the cross and below the Virgin Mary denotes that the queen is highly respected in the royal house and the Church. Her gesture of greeting and praise expresses her wholehearted support of the king while at the same time suggesting her active involvement in the donation itself.

⁶⁷⁶ Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', in Carola Hicks, ed., *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1992), p. 225.

3.3.2 'Life and Salvation came to us through a Woman'⁶⁷⁷

The Virgin Mary in the introductory miniature of the *Liber Vitae* is depicted as being rather taller than even St Peter. Her head is thrusting forward and her knees are slightly bent. Standing on the right of Christ and above Emma, she holds a small closed book in her left hand, while St Peter holds a key. Both raise their hands in a gesture of prayer and intercession. The placement of the queen beneath the Virgin Mary and the king beneath St Peter suggests typological parallels between the saints and the royal couple.

In England, the association of the earthly queen with the Virgin Mary had been encouraged at Winchester by Ælfhryth, King Æthelred's mother. Since the seventh century, nunneries were often dedicated to the Virgin Mary.⁶⁷⁸ By the tenth and eleventh centuries, there were many English churches and monasteries in possession of the Virgin's relics. Three eleventh-century lists of Marian relics in England come from Winchester, Bath and Exeter. They include fragments of her clothing, her hair and her sepulchre, as well as of her milk.⁶⁷⁹ The lists of relics in the *Liber Vitae* of the New Minster include part of Mary's tunic and her sepulchre.

Mary's power as intercessor is evident in the large number of prayers dedicated to the Virgin Mary in eleventh-century Winchester manuscripts. Æthelwold Bishop of Winchester promoted further Marian devotion and composed an Office to the Virgin Mary.⁶⁸⁰ Æthelwold's pupil, Ælfwine, dean of New Minster, was equally devoted to the Virgin. Ælfwine's private prayer book,

⁶⁷⁷ Benjamin Thorpe, ed., *Catholic Homilies*, pt. I, 'The Annunciation of St Mary', pp. 194-5.

⁶⁷⁸ In the ninth century, Wilton was dedicated to Mary and Bartholomew, while Shaftesbury and the Nunnaminster in Winchester were dedicated to the Virgin. See Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 130.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

⁶⁸⁰ Cyril Roy Hart, *The Early Charters of Eastern England*, vol. 5 (Leicester, 1966), p. 167.

c.1023-1035 (BL, Cotton MS Titus D. xxvii) features the earliest surviving text of a Marian Office, which is likely to have been initiated by Æthelwold: 'Sancta uirgo uirginum, succure. Sancta Dei genitrix, intercede. Sancta Maria cum sanctis uirginibus Dei, feliciter exaudi, que inter Cherubim et Seraphim adsumpta, agnum Dei immaculatum sequeris'.⁶⁸¹

The manuscript contains four prayers to the Virgin Mary, which follow the Marian Office. The first is the Carolingian prayer *Singularis meriti* and the third the *Oratio Alchfrido*.⁶⁸² The most conspicuous of the four prayers is the *Oratio ad Dei Genitricem*, which appears only in Winchester. In this prayer, the Virgin is further exalted for her power as intercessor in life and death and she is addressed for the first time with the words *solamen et refocillatio omnium credentium*.⁶⁸³ The Virgin's intercessionary power is further stressed by six invocations in the manuscript's litany: 'Sancta Maria, ora. Sancta Maria, intercede pro me misero peccatore. Sancta Maria, adiuua me in die exitus mei ex hac praesenti uita. Sancta Maria, adiuua me in dietribulationis meae. Sancta Dei genitrix, ora. Sancta uirgo uirginum, ora.'⁶⁸⁴ Along similar lines, Ælfric in his sermon *The Annunciation of St Mary*, presents Mary as the source of salvation: 'Death and perdition befell us through a woman, and afterwards life and salvation came to us through a woman.'⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁸¹ See Beate Günzel, ed., *Ælfwine's Prayerbook*, HBS 108 (London, 1993), p. 53; Henri Barré, *Prières anciennes de l'Occident à la Mère du Sauveur: Desorigines à Saint Anselme*, (Paris, 1963), p. 134: 'Holy Virgin of Virgins, help. Holy mother of God, intercede. Holy Mary, together with the holy virgins of God, listen favourably, because you are assumed amongst the Cherubim and the Seraphim, you follow the immaculate Lamb of God.'

⁶⁸² The second and the fourth prayer occur only in Winchester and presumably were composed there. See Mary Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 136-7.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁶⁸⁴ Henri Barré, *Prières anciennes de l'Occident à la Mère du Sauveur: Desorigines à Saint Anselme*, p. 134: 'Holy Mary, pray. Holy Mary intercede for me, a wretched sinner. Holy Mary, help me on the day of my departure from this present life. Holy Mary, help me on the day of my distress. Holy Mary/of God, pray. Holy Virgin of Virgins, pray.'

⁶⁸⁵ Benjamin. Thorpe, ed., *Catholic Homilies, 'The Annunciation of St Mary'*, pp. 194-5.

3.4 Royal Couples

3.4.1 Divine Crowning

The prefatory miniature is unique in that it portrays an Anglo-Saxon royal couple in a shared act of donation combined with a coronation scene. The prefatory miniature shows iconographical influence from Ottonian and Byzantine double ruler portraits, in which royal or imperial couples are depicted in coronation and donation scenes. In Ottonian miniatures and ivories, royal couples are usually depicted either being crowned by Christ, the Virgin Mary and various saints, or donating books before sacred or divine authorities. By contrast to the prefatory miniature of the New Minster *Liber Vita*, in Ottonian and Byzantine art the king, not the queen, usually stands in the place of honour on Christ's right.⁶⁸⁶

It was part of a well-established tradition in Ottonian and Byzantine iconography to show royal couples crowned by Christ, the Virgin Mary or various saints. An Ottonian miniature from the Goslar Gospels, written in Echternach, c.1047-56 (Goslar Gospels, Uppsala, University Library, Cod. 93, fol. 3v) shows Christ crowning Henry III and Agnes (fig. 136). A miniature in the Pericopes Book of Henry II, c.1002-12 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4452, fol. 2) depicts Henry II and Kunigunde crowned by Christ flanked by St Peter and St Paul, who intercede for the royal couple with Christ (fig. 135).

A tenth-century Ottonian ivory plaque, c.982-3 (Paris, Musée national du Moyen Âge, Thermes et hôtel de Cluny) depicts Otto II and Empress Theophano (972-991) flanking Christ (fig. 137).⁶⁸⁷ Christ, standing in the centre, blesses the

⁶⁸⁶ Catherine Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, 2004, 'Ælfgifu/Emma and Cnut', p. 123.

⁶⁸⁷ The Ottonian court had sent embassies to Constantinople to search for a bride for Otto II, the young son and co-emperor of Otto I the Great. The wife-to-be was Theophano, a niece of the

couple by laying his hands on the crowns worn by Otto II and Theophano.⁶⁸⁸ In the inscription, Otto II bears the title of Emperor of the Romans, Augustus. The emperor Otto II, Theophano, and Christ stand on stools. Beneath Otto II's stool is the kneeling figure of the donor, designated in the inscription as John, probably the archbishop of Piacenza.⁶⁸⁹ A very similar composition features on a tenth-century Byzantine ivory (Paris, Paris, Cabinet des Médailles) depicting Christ *Crowning the Emperor Romanos II and the Empress Eudoxia* (fig. 138).

3.4.2 Royal Couples as donors and supplicants

A miniature from a gospel book, written in Lotharingia, c.940-70 (The Hague, Royal Library, MS 761/1, fol. 214v) depicts Count Dietrich of Holland and his wife Hildegard flanking an altar and donating an open book to the Monastery of Egmont (fig. 142a). Showing their spiritual devotion and piety, the royal couple place the open book on the altar together.⁶⁹⁰ A Latin verse commemorates the

emperor John I Tzimiskes. The couple was married in St Peter's in Rome, on Easter Sunday, April 14 in 972 and at the same time Theophano was crowned empress by the Pope. When her husband Otto II died in 983, she assumed the regency for her three-year-old son Otto III, using the title *imperatrix augusta* and even the male version *imperator*. As part of her marriage gift Theophano had received in Rome, important lands in the Low Countries, which had belonged to Queen Matilda, grandmother of Otto II, who had died in 968. See Henry Mayr-Harting, *Ottonian Art Illumination*, pt. 1, pp. 134-135, 141-142; Krijnie Ciggaar, 'The Empress Theophano (972-991): Political and Cultural Implications of her presence in Western Europe for the Low Countries, in particular for the County of Holland', in V. D van Aalst and K. N. Ciggaar, eds. *Byzantium and the Low Countries in the Tenth Century* (Holland, 1985), pp. 33-60. See also Karl Leyser, 'The Tenth Century in Byzantine-Western Relationships' (1982), pp. 103-37.

⁶⁸⁸ These richly ornamented crowns with *prependoulia* (pendants) were worn by the Byzantine emperors.

⁶⁸⁹ It may be John Philagathos, archbishop of Piacenza, who sought to bring the Eastern German Empire and the Byzantine Empire closer together. See 'Couronnement d'Otton II et de Théophano', available at :

http://www.musee-moyenage.fr/homes/home_id20392_u112.htm

⁶⁹⁰ Thierry II was probably born in c.930, married Hildegard, a daughter of the count of Flanders in c. 950 and died in 988. Hildegard probably died between 975 and 980. See Henry, M. R. E. Mayr-

donation: 'This book was given by Thierry (Dirk) and Hildegard, his beloved wife, to the gracious father Adalbert, that he shall righteously remember them in all eternity.'⁶⁹¹

On folio 215 of the same manuscript (fig. 142b) Count Dietrich is depicted kneeling, and behind him, Hildegard is prostrating herself before St Adalbert, patron of Egmont monastery. Standing before Christ in Majesty in a mandorla above, St Adalbert points to the couple, interceding for them with Christ. A Latin verse quotes St Adalbert's intercessory prayer in the second person to expound the reason for the donation: 'Most exalted Lord, I beg you emphatically with benevolence to look after the welfare of these people, who take so much trouble to serve you in worthy manner'.⁶⁹² This is reminiscent of the *Liber Vitae* prefatory miniature, where the patrons of the New Minster, the Virgin Mary and St Peter, flank the royal couple suggesting their intercessory benevolence in the couple's plea for salvation.

A miniature in the Ottonian gospel book Codex Aureus c.1043-46 (Cod. Vitr. 17, fol. 3r) depicts King Henry III and his wife Agnes presenting a book of the

Harting, *Ottonian Book Illumination*, (London, 1991), pt. II, p. 60. The kneeling position of Thierry is similar to that of the emperor Charles the Bald adoring a crucifix in his prayer book in c. 846-869 (Munich, Residenz, Schatzkammer, ff. 38v-39r; fig. 98), and to that of the emperor Louis in the so-called the Louis Psalter, dating from the mid-ninth century (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Theol. Lat., fol. 120r). The donor, identified as King Louis the German or Louis the Pious, is placing a crucifix into a base. See Corine Schleif, 'Kneeling on the Threshold: Donors Negotiating Realms Betwixt and Between', in Elina Gertsman and Jill Stevenson, eds., *Thresholds of Medieval Visual Culture: Liminal Spaces*, (Woodbridge, 2012), p. 204, fig. 8.

⁶⁹¹ See Mayr-Harting, *Ottonian Art Illumination*, ch., 2, p. 57, 60; Anne S. Korteweg, Henri L. M. Defoer, James H. Marrow, and Wilhelmina C. M. Wüstefeld, *The Golden Age of Dutch Manuscript Painting* (New York, 1990), p. 148; A. S. Korteweg, 'Thierry II, Count of Holland, and his wife Hildegard and their Donations to Egmond Abbey', in Victoria D. van Aalst and K. N. Ciggaar, *Byzantium and the Low Countries in the Tenth Century: Aspects of Art and History of Art and History in the Ottonian Era* (Dordrecht, 1985), pp. 146-156, at p. 147.

⁶⁹² A. S. Korteweg, 'Thierry II, Count of Holland, and his wife Hildegard and their Donations to Egmond Abbey', pp. 147-148.

Gospels to Mary (fig. 144b).⁶⁹³ The royal couple flank the enthroned Virgin Mary, patron of Speyer Cathedral. Henry III kneels holding an open book. As in the *Liber Vitae*, the king offers the donation, not the queen. The miniature commemorates a donation given by a royal couple to a monastic church in exchange for prayers and the promise of salvation. Here, as in the *Liber Vitae* the symmetrical depiction of the royal couple shows influence from the Byzantine tradition. On folio 3v of the same manuscript Henry's III parents, Conrad II and Gisela, are depicted kneeling in adoration flanking Christ in Majesty (fig. 144a).

The tiny figures of Heinrich II and his wife Kunigunde at the feet of Christ are depicted on the Basel Antependium of Bamberg, c. 1020 (Paris, Musée de Cluny) (fig. 141). Empress Kunigunde, daughter of King Cnut, and her husband Henry II crouched in adoration flank Christ standing in the middle of the composition.⁶⁹⁴ The Latin inscription at the top and bottom of the golden frontal of the altar emphasises the intercessory purpose of the donation.

An eleventh-century (1042-55) mosaic in the southern gallery in St Sophia in Constantinople depicts the Pantocrator amid Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos and Empress Zoe (fig. 139). Here, the royal couple, crowned and

⁶⁹³ The Codex Aureus was commissioned by Emperor Henry III in 1045-46 for Speyer Cathedral; see George Zarnecki, 'Ottonian Art', in *Art of the Medieval World* (New York, 1975), pp. 165-73; Krijnie Ciggaar, 'The Empress Theophano (972-991): Political and Cultural Implications of her presence in Western Europe for the Low Countries, in particular for the County of Holland', in V. D van Aalst and K. N. Ciggaar, eds, *Byzantium and the Low Countries in the Tenth Century* (Holland, 1985), pp. 33-60.

⁶⁹⁴ In 1021, Henry II and a number of churchmen took part in the dedication of the monastery of St Michael. A golden antependium, made of hammered gold, 120cm by 77.5, and known as the Basel Antependium of Bamberg was likely to have been his donation for the main altar of the church. It is divided in five parts. Christ is flanked by the Archangel Michael and St Benedict, on his right, and the archangels Gabriel and Raphael on his left. A mosaic in the narthex of St Sophia in Constantinople depicts the Byzantine emperor Leo VI (886-912); see Mayr-Harting, *Ottonian Art Illumination*, ch. 2, pt. I, p. 66.

haloed, bears offerings. In contrast to Cnut, Emperor Constantine stands on the right of Christ holding a sack of gold while Zoe holds a scroll with the list of her donations to the Church.

3.5 The City of God

In the Roman period, the word *apotheosis* was used for the transition of a Roman emperor from the earthly sphere to the divine. The emperor's deification, expressed the highest point of his earthly power. The deification of a virtuous and successful Roman emperor, his *apotheosis*, was visually expressed with the elevation of the emperor or the imperial couple to the heavens.⁶⁹⁵ An exemplar of Roman *apotheosis* is the relief at the base of the Column of Emperor Antoninus Pious (Rome, Vatican Gardens) dated from the second century BC, which shows the imperial couple, Antoninus Pious and his wife Annia Faustina, taken by a winged creature towards the sky (fig. 146). The composition places emphasis on the upward movement, which separates the imperial couple from the rest of the people.

A Roman coin with the veiled bust of Constantine I (*DN CONSTANTINUS PF AVGG*) facing to the right has on the reverse the deified Constantine standing and driving *quadriga* with the *Manus Dei* (*S MANA*) appearing from above.⁶⁹⁶ Constantine, who had been baptised on his deathbed, was the last emperor to be

⁶⁹⁵ The word *apotheosis* refers to the change in the nature of the person, the transition from human to divine status. It means elevation to the rank of God; deification; glorification of a person or thing or glorified ideal.

⁶⁹⁶ The coin was struck by Constantine's successor Constantius II (Antioch, 337-340) to commemorate the Deification of the previous emperor. Constantine, who had been baptized on his deathbed, was the last emperor to be deified. On this coin, pagan ideas such as the deification of the emperor are united with Christian symbolism, namely, the Hand of God.

deified. The iconography of the coin unites pagan ideas such as the deification of the emperor with Christian symbolism, namely, the Hand of God.

Christian kings and emperors, since they were not considered gods or gods to be, did not aspire to Roman *Apotheosis* but plead instead with God for Christian salvation and a place in Paradise. The iconography in the prefatory miniatures of Æthelstan, Edgar and Cnut expresses the Anglo-Saxon kings' desire to be God's elect and to be given the promise of salvation.

3.5.1 The Ideal King according to Ælfric

Ælfric's homilies suggest that the ideal of Anglo-Saxon kingship is modelled on biblical kingship. The great Old Testament leaders, patriarchs, kings, high priests, and judges stood as a prefiguration of Christ and inspired the Anglo-Saxons. Moulded on the ideals of the biblical leaders the Anglo-Saxon kings presented themselves in what I would describe as a 'post-figuration' of Christ.

Presenting to the congregation the ideal of a king, Ælfric often quotes and gives accounts of the lives of glorious kings and queens from the past such as King David, King Solomon, Queen of Sheba, and King Alfred. In his homily 'On the Greater Litany', Ælfric gives the meaning of good kingship: 'In a king are becoming righteousness and wisdom; on him a name is set of the governorship, that he may direct himself, and afterwards his people with wisdom, and well correct him.'⁶⁹⁷ And he adds, further on: 'The people are happy in as sagacious, victorious and prosperous through a discreet ruler. And they are made miserable through an unwise king, by many mischances, from his misguidance.'⁶⁹⁸ Ælfric's ideal king should 'live the life acceptably to God', he should acknowledge the

⁶⁹⁷ B. Thorpe, *The Homilies of Ælfric*, 'On the Greater Litany', p. 319.

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

superiority of God through the offering of gifts and prayer, he should set an example to his subjects, and he should 'be a type of our Saviour Christ'.⁶⁹⁹

According to Ælfric, faith in God, humility, piety, offering of gifts, prayer, patience, and wisdom are the main characteristics of good kingship.⁷⁰⁰ 'On the Dedication of the Church', Ælfric comments that, '[h]e who corrects thoughtlessness or impatience, and stills the bitterness of his heart, drives away serpents, for he extinguishes the evilnesses of his mind'.⁷⁰¹ In The Old Testament, Solomon asked for wisdom which was granted to him by divine grace. Accordingly, patience and wisdom are virtues related to King Solomon, since patience leads to wisdom and wisdom to good judgment.

3.5.2 St Augustine and the City of God

In his epistle to Thessalonians, Paul refers to the translation of the Church during the Second Coming.⁷⁰² He emphasises that the Church, as a body of righteous people, is alive and at the Second Coming is going to meet the Lord in the air and be with Him forever. Paul's words are echoed in the iconography of

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

⁷⁰⁰ A good king should 'live the life acceptably to God', should acknowledge the superiority of God through the offering of gifts and prayer, should set an example to his subjects and 'be a type of our Saviour Christ'.

⁷⁰¹ Patience, closely related to wisdom, is another quality of good kingship. Ælfric expands: 'In your patience ye shall possess your souls'. For him, patience is the root and safeguard of all holy virtues whereas impatience is of all virtues the dispersion. We read, '[t]he wisdom of man is known through patience.' In this respect, Solomon said, "[a] patient man is more excellent than a strong one, and who governeth his mind is better than he who conquereth a city. A greater victory it is, that a man govern himself by patience, than that he abroad capture cities". See 'On the Nativity of the Holy Martyrs' in B. Thorpe, *The Homilies of Ælfric*, p. 545.

⁷⁰² 1Th 4:16-17: 'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'

the *Liber Vitae* prefatory miniature and *Last Judgment* miniatures (ff. 6v-7) (figs. 7-17). King Cnut and Queen Emma, separated from the rest of the congregation, and elevated, are about to meet Christ in Majesty in the air (fig. 7). And in the next two folios the noble crowd led by two prelates, as a body of righteous people, the Church, is ready to join the Lord at the Second Coming (fig. 10-15).

Paul's ideas on the Second Coming and Ælfric's homily on the translation of Enoch and Elijah in the Old Testament agree with the views of St Augustine of Hippo in the *De Civitate Dei* (City of God).⁷⁰³ In Ælfric's homilies there are references to St Augustine's writings. Augustine's *Civitas Dei* was studied by Pope Gregory the Great. It was also studied by Charlemagne who believed that he had founded the *Civitas Dei* upon earth.

In the *De Civitate Dei* St Augustine presents a Christianised version of Plato's *Republic*. In the *Civitas Dei*, God, His Angels, and the Saints in Heaven are united with the righteous on earth. Portraying an ideal Christian city, St Augustine divides the human society into four grades: *Domus* or Household; *Civitas* (city/state); *Orbis Terrae* (earth and the human society in it); *Mundus* or Universe, consisting of the heavens and their constellations, the earth, God, His angels, the souls of the departed, and the human society now living on earth. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* excludes the fallen angels and the unrighteous left on earth.

The prefatory miniature of the *Liber Vitae* strikes us visually as the ideal *City of God*, with the righteous King Cnut and Queen Emma suspended between the *Orbis Terrae*, where 'Church is a pilgrim society, living by faith and looking to

⁷⁰³ See Henry Bettenson, trans., St Augustine of Hippo, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans* (Harmonsworth, 1985).

the Hereafter', and the *Mundus* with God, His Angels and Saints.⁷⁰⁴ The prefatory miniature and the following folios depicting the *Last Judgement* invoke Augustine's ideal of a Christian City, where the divine and the human realm dwell together in a common 'citizenship'.⁷⁰⁵ The outline drawings in the *Liber Vitae* also stand as a visual reminder of St Augustine's words: 'Remove righteousness and what are kingdoms but great bands of brigands?'⁷⁰⁶

3.5.3 The Queen of Sheba and King Solomon as Church and Christ

In the account of the meeting of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon, in the homily 'On the Dedication of a Church', Ælfric exalts King Solomon's wisdom and generosity, and compares the Queen of Sheba with the Church and King Solomon with Christ.⁷⁰⁷ Ælfric expounds to the congregation the true meaning of the account of the Hallowing of the Temple and expands on the symbolism of the narration by saying: 'The queen was a type of the holy church of all Christian folk, that came to the peaceful Christ, to bear his wisdom and the evangelical doctrine which he established.'⁷⁰⁸ Ælfric continues his homily referring to the Queen of Sheba as the Church and to King Solomon as Christ. And he adds:

The queen said, that it had not been told her by half concerning Solomon's greatness, and the ghostly queen, God's church, or every

⁷⁰⁴ St Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God: Concerning the City of God Against the Pagans*, Henry S. Bettenson, trans. (Harmonsworth, 1985), xx.9.

⁷⁰⁵ St Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God*, Introduction.

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, Introduction.

⁷⁰⁷ 'Then the queen Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon, and the great temple that he had built, and the gifts that were offered to God, and the king's manifold services, and was so greatly astonished that she had no further spirit, for she could not inquire further.' See 'On the Dedication of a Church', in Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., *The Homilies of Ælfric* (London, 1844), vol. II, p. 585.

⁷⁰⁸ B. Thorpe, 'On the Dedication of a Church', *The Homilies of Ælfric*, p. 587.

holy soul, when it comes to the heavenly Jerusalem, will then see greater grandeur and glory than had before in life been announced of it by prophets or apostles.

And, further on, Ælfric adds: 'Christ is of all kings king, and as all nations would see the peaceful Solomon, and hear his wisdom, and brought him divers gifts'.⁷⁰⁹

The comparison of the Queen of Sheba with the Church is reminiscent of the Ottonian manuscript illumination where the Church is represented by the female figure of *Ecclesia*. In the prefatory miniature of the *Ecclesia and the Lamb of God* in a Pericopes Book, produced in Fulda in the late tenth century, fol. 1v (fig. 101) and in the *Illustration of all Saints* in a sacramentary, made in Fulda in the late tenth century, fol. 66v (fig. 102), *Ecclesia* is depicted as a female figure.

In the *Liber Vitae* prefatory miniature, the iconography of Queen Emma and King Cnut echoes Ælfric's homily. Queen Emma evokes the comparison of the Queen of Sheba with the Church while King Cnut reflects King Solomon 'as a type of our Saviour Christ'.⁷¹⁰ In Ælfric's words, good kingship is closely related to Christ because a good king is modelled on Christ, who is 'of all kings king', that is to say, a type of our Saviour Christ.⁷¹¹

The iconography of the royal couple, lifted as they are above the rest of the congregation, suggests a depiction of salvation while also agreeing with the nature of the manuscript—a *Liber Vitae*. It also gives hope and access to salvation for everyone standing near to King Cnut and Queen Emma. Presumably all the three prefatory miniatures create an environment, a pictorial 'topos' for a desirable event to take place in the near future. They stage a visual prefiguration of great

⁷⁰⁹ B. Thorpe, 'On the Dedication of a Church', *The Homilies of Ælfric*, pp. 587-9.

⁷¹⁰ B. Thorpe, ed. and trans., *The Homilies of Ælfric*, p. 579.

⁷¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 589.

future events anticipated by the Anglo-Saxon kings: the pious King Æthelstan will stand next to St Cuthbert; King Edgar and King Cnut with Queen Emma will be taken by God on the day of Judgement and, like Elijah and Enoch in the Old Testament, they will not face death because they are God's elects. It can be argued that the three prefatory miniatures portray a visual commemoration of the pious Anglo-Saxon kings who aspire 'to walk with God'.

3.6 'To Pray for the remission of my sins'⁷¹²

Examining the iconography of the prefatory miniature in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, Jan Gerchow draws attention to its commemorative character, interpreting it as a *memorabil* or commemoration picture, that reflects the king's desire for the salvation of his soul.⁷¹³ As a commemoration picture, the prefatory miniature of the *Liber Vitae* carries three meanings: it is a donor's portrait, a coronation picture, and a portrait of a royal couple.⁷¹⁴ Turning the focus to the close relationship between donation and liturgical commemoration, Jan Gerchow suggests that the donation of the cross guarantees the liturgical commemoration of the royal names and prayers recited on their behalf by the monks.⁷¹⁵ On the other hand, Thomas Heslop draws attention to the unrivalled reputation of King Cnut and Queen Emma as patrons of the Church and the great increase in the

⁷¹² Dorothy Whitelock, 'Cnut's Letter of 1027', in *EHD*, (1955), pp. 416-8.

⁷¹³ Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', in *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed., Carola Hicks (Stamford, 1992), p. 221.

⁷¹⁴ Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', p. 237.

⁷¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

production of *de luxe* manuscripts in the 1020s. He suggests that the donations of luxurious manuscripts served royal propaganda and demonstrated royal piety.⁷¹⁶

3.6.1 *Crux Magna, Crux Sancta*⁷¹⁷

King Æthelstan in the *Vitae Sancto Cuthberti* and King Edgar in the New Minster Charter are depicted holding a book. By contrast, King Cnut in the *Liber Vitae* is holding onto a large golden cross. The cross, the main symbol of Christianity, is closely associated with salvation. In the prefatory miniature of the *Liber Vitae*, the cross, enhanced by its large size and bright golden colour, is the focus of the composition around which all action revolves. Barbara Raw suggests that reverence of the cross in Anglo-Saxon art opens the path to heaven.⁷¹⁸ In this respect, the donation of the golden cross by the royal couple and the depiction of Cnut and Emma on each side of the shaft not only releases divine rewards, the veil and the crown, but also triggers the promise of salvation for them.

The prefatory miniature emphasises the close relationship between the king and the cross as it is only the king who holds onto the cross (fig. 8). The queen's hand is very close to the cross and to the king's hand, but she does not touch either. Reflecting Cnut's gesture, Emma raises her right arm towards the cross and the king in an open hand gesture that probably suggests greeting or acclamation. It also seems that the queen gracefully assigns the honour of the

⁷¹⁶ Thomas A. Heslop, 'The Production of *de luxe* Manuscripts and the Patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma', *ASE* 19 (1990), pp. 151-95.

⁷¹⁷ Florence of Worcester, *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi, Chronicon ex Chronicis*, ed. B. Thorpe (London, 1848-9), II: 133-6.

⁷¹⁸ See Barbara C. Raw, 'The Nature and Purpose of Anglo-Saxon Church Art', in *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival* (Cambridge, 1990), ch. 1, pp. 4-39, esp. at p. 63.

donation primarily to the king, who proudly holds onto the venerable symbol of Christianity.

The prefatory miniature raises certain questions: did the donation of the gold cross by the royal couple really take place? Did King Cnut donate the cross to the New Minster in Winchester?

Under Cnut's rule, Winchester became very important as a royal residence and the Old and New Minsters were closely associated with the royal couple. When King Cnut died in 1035, he was buried in the Old Minster of Winchester.⁷¹⁹ Harthacnut, the son of Cnut and Emma, was also buried in the Old Minster. These burials suggest the close association of the royal family with this place. According to William of Malmesbury, 'Cnut grandly demonstrated the magnificence of his liberality to Winchester where he assembled so much that the quantity of metals terrifies the minds of strangers and the splendour of the gems lashes the eyes of the onlookers.'⁷²⁰ Writing in the twelfth century, Florence of Worcester refers to a large cross donated by King Cnut to the New Minster: *Crux magna, crux sancta, iussu Regis Canuti dudum fabricate, et ab eodem auro et argento, gemmis et lapidibus pretiosis decentissime adornata*.⁷²¹

Veneration of the cross is suggested by a number of continental kings and ecclesiastics such as Charles the Bald (Munich, Schatzkammer, 38v-39r; fig. 98) and

⁷¹⁹ Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', p. 219 and p. 220.

⁷²⁰ J. A. Gilles, ed., 'Of King Cnut', in *William of Malmesbury's Chronicle of the Kings of England*, Ch. xi, p. 198.

⁷²¹ Florence of Worcester, *Florentii Wigorniensis monachi, Chronicon ex Chronicis*, ed. B. Thorpe (London, 1848-9), II: 133-6; Thomas Heslop, 'The Production of *de luxe* Manuscripts and the Patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma', *ASE* 19 (1990), p. 151. It was stated that it was 'a great cross...Becomingly covered by [Cnut] with gold and silver, gems and precious stones'. Also mentioned, perhaps as a supplementary gift, are two large images of Mary and John well covered with gold and silver. It owes its celebrity now principally to the fact that a contemporary drawing survives showing Cnut and Emma presenting the cross on the high altar of the abbey. After its destruction during the siege of Winchester in 1141, it was said that the bishop, Henry of Blois, carried away from the burnt cross 500 pounds of silver and thirty marks of gold.

Rabanus Maurus (MS 652, fol. 35v, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek; fig. 44) depicted kneeling before a cross or crucifix.⁷²² The *Crucifixion* scene in the frontispiece of the Gospels of Judith of Flanders/Weingarten Gospels (New York, Piermont Morgan Library, MS 709, fol. 1v) shows the Virgin Mary and St John flanking Christ on a rough-hewn Cross while Judith, depicted as a donor, kneels before the Cross and embraces it (fig. 128).⁷²³

The tradition of cross-donations was strong in the Ottonian Empire. Eager to be associated with showing reverence to the cross, German emperors donated crosses to churches, and Anglo-Saxon kings followed the same practice.⁷²⁴ King Æthelstan gave 'one cross skilfully finished with gold and ivory' to Chester-le-Street in 934.⁷²⁵ King Edgar offered Ely a cross containing relics.⁷²⁶ Only one Anglo-Saxon cross has survived, however, the Drahmal cross, now in Brussels.⁷²⁷ The golden cross in the *Liber Vitae* resembles continental crosses of the Lothar type. The so-called Lothar cross, given around 1000 by Otto III to Aachen, resembles Cnut's cross, especially at the ends of the cross-arms (Aachen Cathedral; fig. 130).

The cross, symbol of Christ's ultimate sacrifice—his death for the sins of mankind upon the Cross—was attributed with miraculous powers. It is well

⁷²² Raw suggests that the miniature of Dunstan kneeling in front of Christ Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. F. 4. 32, fol. 1r), and deacon Ælfwine standing in front of St Peter (BL, Cotton Titus D. xxvi, 19v) show influence from the miniature of Rabanus Maurus adoring the cross. See Barbara Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 24.

⁷²⁴ Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', p. 219.

⁷²⁵ Ted Johnson South, ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* (Cambridge, 2002), ch., 26, p. 65.

⁷²⁶ *Liber Eliensis*, ed. E. O. Blake, Camden 3rd. Ser. XCII (London, 1962), ch. II, 4, p. 76.

⁷²⁷ Janet Backhouse, D. H. Turner, Leslie Webster, eds., *The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art* (London, 1984), no. 75, pl. xxiii.

known that the cross was used as an object of power in Anglo-Saxon charms, particularly in relation to the recovery of stolen property.⁷²⁸ It is important to recall that not only the relics of the cross but also the gesture of the sign of the cross had apotropaic power. Anglo-Saxons were exhorted to 'bless all their bodies seven times with Christ's rood token.'⁷²⁹ Bede in his letter to Bishop Egbert, advises him to remind his flock 'with what frequent diligence to employ upon themselves the sign of our Lord's cross.'⁷³⁰ And Ælfric reminds his audience in one of his sermons:

A man may wave about wonderfully with his hands without creating any blessing unless he make the sign of the cross. But if he do the fiend will soon be frightened on account of the victorious token. With three fingers one must bless himself for the Holy Trinity.⁷³¹

In the Anglo-Saxon period special liturgies were introduced and prayers were composed for the veneration of the cross.⁷³² In the *Regularis Concordia*, there is a reference to a service for the Veneration of the Cross at Nones on Good Friday.⁷³³

⁷²⁸ Roy M. Liuzza, 'Prayers and/or Charms Addressed to the Cross', in *Cross and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England: Studies in Honor of George Hardin Brown*, eds., Karen L. Jolly, Catherine E. Karkov, and Sarah L. Keefer (Morgantown, 2007), pp. 279-323.

⁷²⁹ Blicking Hom., p. 47. See D. G. Scragg, 'The Homilies of the Blickling Manuscripts', in Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss, eds, *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 299-316.

⁷³⁰ Dorothy Whitelock, ed. and trans., 'Letter of Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, to King Cnut', in *English Historical Documents 500-1042* (London, 1955), p. 825.

⁷³¹ Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church* (London, 1844-6) vol. I, p. 462.

⁷³² Roy M. Liuzza, 'Prayers and/or Charms Addressed to the Cross', pp. 279-323.

⁷³³ *Regularis Concordia Anglicae Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque: The Monastic Agreement of the Monks and Nuns of the English Nation*, ed. and trans. Dom Thomas Symons (London, 1953), ch., IV: 43-44, pp. 41-43; Sarah L. Keefer, 'The Veneration of the Cross in Anglo-Saxon England' in H. Gittos and M. Bradford, *The Liturgy of the Late Anglo-Saxon Church* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 143-184.

During the service the holy Cross is placed before the altar.⁷³⁴ In one of the prayers in honour of the cross the suppliant asks humbly for forgiveness: 'Here me prostrate before thy adorable and most glorious Cross that I may deserve to stand before thee, pure and pleasing in the sight.'⁷³⁵

In sculpture, the monumental crosses of *Bewcastle* and *Ruthwell*, dated back to the eighth century, and the standing crosses in Ireland are witnesses to the veneration of the cross.⁷³⁶ Moreover, one of the six series of carvings at the Tower of the New Minster was dedicated to the cross.⁷³⁷ In Anglo-Saxon literature, the poem *The Dream of the Rood*, in the late tenth-century Vercelli Book or Codex Vercellensis (Vercelli, Library of S Eusebio Cathedral, Codex Cvii), is dedicated to

⁷³⁴ 'When the prayers have all been said, the Cross shall straightway be set up before the altar, a space being left between it and the altar; and it shall be held up by two deacons, one on either side. Then the deacons shall sing *Populus meus*, two subdeacons standing before the cross and responding in Greek, *Agios o Theos, Agios Yschiros, Agios Athanatos eleison ymas*, and the *schola* repeating the same in Latin, *Sanctus Deus*. The Cross shall then be borne before the altar by the two deacons, an acolyte following with a cushion upon which the holy Cross shall be laid. When the antiphon is finished which the *schola* has sung in Latin, the deacons shall sing *Quia eduxi vos per desertum*, the subdeacons responding *Agios* in Greek and the *schola Sanctus Deus* in Latin as before. Again the deacons, raising up the Cross, sing *Quid ultra* as before, the subdeacons responding *Agios* and the *schola Sanctus Deus* as before. Then, unveiling the Cross and turning towards the clergy, the deacons shall sing the antiphons *Ecce lignum cruces, Crucem tuam adoramus Domine, Dum Fabricator mundi* and the verses of Fortunatus, *Pange lingua*. As soon as it has been unveiled, the abbot shall come before the holy Cross and shall prostrate himself thrice with all the brethren of the right hand side of the choir, that is for seniors and juniors; and with deep and heartfelt sighs shall say the seven Pentinental psalms and the prayers in honour of the holy Cross'. See D. T. Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, ch., IV: 44, pp. 42-43.

⁷³⁵ D. T. Symons, *Regularis Concordia*, ch., IV: 45, pp. 44-45; Jennifer O' Reilly, 'St John the Evangelist: Between Two Worlds', in *Insular and Anglo-Saxon Art. Art and Thought in the Early Medieval Period*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Pennsylvania, 2011), pp. 189-218.

⁷³⁶ The Ruthwell Cross is an 18 foot, free standing, Anglo-Saxon Cross, perhaps intended as a 'conversion tool'. Bede frequently refers to the cross both as an object and as a symbol of salvation; see Meyer Schapiro, 'The Religious Meaning of the Ruthwell Cross', *Art Bulletin* 26: 4 (1944), pp. 232-45.

⁷³⁷ Between 980 and 988, Æthelgar placed six series of carvings on the tower at Winchester: the first, at the ground floor, was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and the next five to the Holy Trinity, the cross, all saints, St Michael and the four evangelists; see *Liber Vitae*, ed. W. de Gray Birch, (London, 1982), p. 10; Roger Nathaniel Quirk, 'Winchester New Minster and its Tenth Century Tower', *Jnl of the British Archaeological Association*, ser. 3: 34 (Oxford 1961), pp. 21-2, 33-5 and 38-9.

the power of the cross. In the poem, the cross represents the passion, death and resurrection of Christ and stands as the triumphant sign of Christ's victory over death. In his dream the narrator sees the cross covered with jewels and he starts speaking to it. Symbolising the Christian faith, the cross becomes the advocate of the triumph over sin and evil. The narrator acknowledges the power of the cross in human salvation: 'May the Lord be my friend/ he who here on Earth once suffered/ on the hanging tree for human sin/ he ransomed us and gave us life/ a heavenly home.'⁷³⁸

The first known mention of the finding of the Holy Cross by St Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, occurs in Ambrose's *De obitu Theodosii*.⁷³⁹ St John Chrysostomos's account of the Cross was written at the end of the fourth century.⁷⁴⁰ In the Anglo-Saxon period, the oldest surviving Old English homiletic version of the famous legend, the *Finding of the True Cross*, is preserved in the Classbook of St Dunstan, mid-tenth century (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auctarium F.4.32/, fols. 10-18).⁷⁴¹ Ælfric's presented two homilies on the cross: one for the Feast of the Invention, 'The Finding of the Cross or the Invention Homily' and another for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.⁷⁴²

⁷³⁸ See Eamonn O'Carragain, *Ritual and the Rood: Liturgical Images and the Poems of The Dream of the Rood Tradition* (London, 2005), p. 7 and p. 228; Adehlied L. J. Thieme, 'Gift Giving as a Vital Element of Salvation in the Dream of the Rood', *South Atlantic Review* (1998), p. 108; Jelena Krstovic, ed., 'The Dream of the Rood: Introduction', *Classical and Medieval Literature Criticism* 14 (1995).

⁷³⁹ *Sanctii Ambrosii Oratio De Obitu Theodosii*, ed. and trans. Sr. Mary Dolorosa Mannix, S. J., *Patristic Studies*, IX (Washington, 1923), pp. 78-83 and pp. 134-47.

⁷⁴⁰ St John Chrysostom: 'Quod Christus sit Deus,' in *Opera Omnia*, ed. Bernard Montfaucon (Paris, 1739, rpt. 1835-39), I, p. 571.

⁷⁴¹ The homily is preserved as the second gathering in the composite volume *The Classbook of St Dunstan* in Oxford Bodleian MS Auctarium F.4.32. For the Finding of the Cross, see Mary-Catherine Bodden, ed. and trans., 'Early History of the Legend', in *The Old English Finding of the True Cross* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp. 24-28.

⁷⁴² Ælfric's 'The Invention of the Holy Cross' is in Benjamin Thorpe, ed. and trans., *The Homilies of Ælfric*, vol. II, pp. 303-307; 'The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross' is in Walter W. Skeat, ed. and

Additionally, in the *Codex Vercellensis*, or Vercelli Book (Vercelli, Library of Sant' Eusebio, Codex Cvii) an Old English manuscript dating back to the end of the tenth century, the poem *Elene* (fol. 121a-133b) refers to the finding of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem.⁷⁴³ Written by Cynewulf, the poem is the first English account of the finding of the Holy Cross by Saint Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine.⁷⁴⁴ In the poem, Constantine, the emperor of Rome, fighting against his enemies, sees the vision of a cross in the sky followed by the words *ἐν τούτῳ νίκα*.⁷⁴⁵

The emperor was told that with this symbol he would defeat his enemies, which was what came to pass. As a consequence, soon after Constantine was baptised, he sent his mother, Helena, with his army to Jerusalem to find the True Cross. When Helena found the cross, she adorned it with gold and gems and placed it in the church she built over the place of its discovery.⁷⁴⁶

Written in the epilogue of the poem, Cynewulf's view of the Last Judgement, echoes the iconography of the Last Judgment in *Liber Vitae*. Similarly to the registers in the Last Judgment miniature, Cynewulf divides the people into

trans., *Ælfric's Lives of Saints* see (London, 1881) EETS, os 76, 82, 94 and 114; The *Codex Vercellensis* contains twenty three prose homilies and a prose life of St Cuthlac which includes the following poems: 'Andreas, 'The Fates of Apostles', 'Soul and Body', 'Dream of the Rood', 'Elene'. See Elaine Treharne, ed., *Old and Middle English c.890-c.1450: An Anthology*, (Blackwell, 2009), pp. 100-129.

⁷⁴³ Pamela Gradon, ed., *Cynewulf's 'Elene'* (New York, 1966); *Vercelli Book*, appearing on fol. 121a-133b.

⁷⁴⁴ The Vercelli manuscript was probably compiled and written in the late 10th century but not all of the texts found in the manuscript were originally written at that time. The poem *Elene* was written by Cynewulf between 750 and the tenth century. It was translated into Old English from a Latin text, the longest of Cynewulf's four signed poems, in runes, *Christ II*, *Juliana*, *The Fates of the Apostles*, and *Elene*. It is the fifth of the six poems in the manuscript *Andreas*, *The Fates of the Apostles*, *Soul and Body*, *Dream of the Rood* *Dream*, *Elene* and the fragment of a homiletic poem.

⁷⁴⁵ *ἐν τούτῳ νίκα*, trans.: 'By this Conquer' IC XC NICA: Jesus Christ Conquer; see Christopher Walter, 'The Significance of the Cross in Constantine's Iconography', in *The Iconography of Constantine the Great, Emperor and Saint: With Associated Studies* (Leiden, 2006), pp. 39-52.

⁷⁴⁶ Chapters xiii and xiv share a common interest in the discovery and disposition of the nails of the Cross. See Pamela Gradon, ed., *Cynewulf's 'Elene'* (New York, 1966).

three groups: two of the three groups are given the promise of salvation while the third one is damned to eternal Hell.

Constantine the Great and Helena were great advocates of the veneration of the cross. Constantine's biographer Eusebius was keen to model the emperor on Christ: 'He is...like Christ.'⁷⁴⁷ He also presented Constantine as the new Moses, comparing his victory at the Milvian Bridge to the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites.⁷⁴⁸ The name of Moses recurs frequently throughout the *Life*.⁷⁴⁹ Christopher Walter stresses the increasing political significance of the cross after Constantine's victory at the Milvian Bridge. Constantine's vision of the cross followed by the words *ἐν τούτῳ νίκη* acquired redemptive and apotropaic powers. Moreover, the cross invested with Constantine's vision developed political and military significance.

As a result, in Byzantine art the cross was often depicted with a commonly inscribed formula, the acronym *IC XC NI KA*.⁷⁵⁰ On some Byzantine coins, the cross featured together with the legend *IC XC NI KA* further reinforcing its apotropaic power.⁷⁵¹ Furthermore, in Byzantine art the abbreviation of Christ's name and the placement of the letters between the arms of the cross became a

⁷⁴⁷ A. Cameron and S. G. Hall, eds. and trans., *Eusebius' Life of Constantine* (Oxford, 1999), IV 72, p. 181.

⁷⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, I, p. 38, p. 84-5; commentary, p. 215. The comparison of Constantine with Moses, 'The great Servant', is explicit in I. 39, p. 85.

⁷⁴⁹ *Moses sub nomine* in index. See A. Cameron and S. G. Hall, ed. and trans., *Eusebius' Life of Constantine* (Oxford, 1999).

⁷⁵⁰ Christopher Walter, 'The Significance of the Cross', in *The Iconography of Constantine the Great*, pp. 39-52 and 164.

⁷⁵¹ For Leo III's (717-41) introduction of the cross and *IC XC NICA*, followed regularly by his successors, see Walter, *The Iconography of Constantine the Great* p. 143. The *ἐν τούτῳ νίκη* legend was the first to be stamped in Greek characters on Byzantine coins. It features on the *folles* of Constans II from 641 to 658 and recurs even much later during the reign of Basil II on the *miliasies*; see C. Morisson, *Catalogue des monnaies byzantines de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris, 1970), p. 331.

standard iconographical type.⁷⁵² The placing of the names and titles of King Cnut and Queen Emma on the right and left of the shaft of the cross reflects a similar approach and probably has further apotropaic significance, suggesting that the cross would protect the royal couple.

In Ottonian art and in Byzantine art Constantine and Helena are often depicted flanking the True Cross. Constantine and Helena holding the cross are depicted on the left lower register of an ivory triptych depicting the Crucifixion and dated to the tenth century (fig. 134). As with the inscription of Cnut and Emma in the *Liber Vitae*, their names feature on the right and left of the upper part of the cross. The same can be seen in Cappadocia, in two churches in Göreme no. 7. In Tokali kilise I, dating from the first quarter of the tenth century, on the wall in a series of saints, Constantine and Helena are portrayed holding between them a large cross (fig. 131). It is probably the earliest example of this iconographical type.⁷⁵³ In Saint Catherine, Göreme 21, dated from the second half of the eleventh century, Constantine and Helena stand holding a cross between them in the vault of the east transept before the apse (fig. 132).⁷⁵⁴ In Göreme no 1, El Nazar, they are placed in the west arm on the north side of the vault, near the Transfiguration and

⁷⁵² Christopher Walter, *The Iconography of Constantine the Great*: Constantine and Helena holding up a framed cross (fig. 39), Yılanlı kilise, Yesilköy (Ihlara); Constantine and Helena holding a two barred cross in a series of saints (fig. 40), Tokali kilise I (Göreme n. 7); Constantine and Helena holding a two barred cross (fig. 44), St Catherine (Göreme 21); (fig. 45) Constantine and Helena (fig. 45), Göreme n. 1, El Nazar; (fig. 46) Constantine and Helena holding two barred cross with acronym (fig. 46), Karsi kilise; Reliquary with Constantine and Helena (fig. 60), silver gilt, Hermitage; Sliding cover with Crucifixion of the Reliquary (fig. 61); Constantine and Helena (fig. 64); Ivory Triptych with Crucifixion, detail of fig. 63 (Staatliche Museen, Berlin). See Catherine Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines, de Cappadoce: Le programme iconographique de l'abside et de ses abords* (Paris, 1991), pp. 106-8.

⁷⁵³ Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 40; C. Walter, 'The Portrayal of Constantine and Helena after their Death', in *Prayer and Power in Byzantine and Papal Imagery* (Variorum, 1993), pp. 35-52, esp. p. 47.

⁷⁵⁴ Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines*, p. 126.

opposite the Baptism. Here they hold a small, symbolic cross between them (fig. 133).⁷⁵⁵

This suggests that the depiction of Cnut and Emma flanking the cross shows influence from the iconography of Constantine and Helena and also from the iconography of the *Deisis* where Mary and John flank Christ Crucified. A copper, alloy plaque from St John's Rinnagan, near Athlone, dating from the eighth century (Dublin, National Museum) depicts the *Crucifixion with Stephaton and Longinus*. The composition echoes that of the *Liber Vitae*, as the figures of Stephaton and Longinus are placed beneath the transverse bar of the cross and two angels flank the upper part (fig. 125).

In the *Crucifixion* from an Anglo-Saxon psalter dating from the second quarter of the eleventh century (Cambridge, University, MS Ff. I. 23, fol. 88v), the Virgin Mary stands, like Queen Emma, on the left of the cross, and John, like Cnut, on the right, with inscriptions showing their names featuring above their heads (fig. 126). Also, in the *Crucifixion* scene from another Anglo-Saxon psalter, c.1060 (British Museum, Arundel MS 60, fol. 12v), the Virgin Mary in *orans* stance, on the right of the Crucified Christ, holds a small book in her right hand as in the *Liber Vitae* prefatory miniature (fig. 129).

An eleventh-century Anglo-Saxon walrus ivory from North Elmham depicts a Last Judgement scene very similar to the composition of the prefatory miniature in the *Liber Vitae* (fig. 124). In the upper register, the Virgin Mary and St Peter are shown flanking Christ in Majesty while Christ's mandorla is placed above a large cross held by two angels in the lower register. Unlike the miniature of the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, the Virgin Mary here is depicted crowned. Mary

⁷⁵⁵ Christopher Walter, *The Iconography of Constantine the Great*, p. 47.

Clayton has suggested that the four figures standing beneath on each side of the cross can be interpreted as the saved souls.⁷⁵⁶ In this respect, Cnut and Emma elevated from the rest of the monastic community and depicted beneath the transverse bar of the altar cross can be also considered as saved souls.

3.6.2 Liturgical Commemoration

The practice of liturgical commemoration in monastic foundations, as indicated in manuscripts and other evidence of the period, shows that the Anglo-Saxons were deeply concerned about salvation. The great importance of liturgical commemoration in the Christian doctrine of salvation is evident in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*.⁷⁵⁷ There is reference to the liturgical commemoration of the royal benefactors: 'their names are written down and are daily recited in the mass in that holy place where they are buried'.⁷⁵⁸

King Cnut presented himself as a great patron of the church, an ideal Christian king who saved the Anglo-Saxon kingdom from the weak reign of King Æthelred II and led it back to the glory of King Edgar's day. Together, the royal couple acted as great patrons of the Church. The large gold cross in the prefatory

⁷⁵⁶ M. Clayton, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 176.

⁷⁵⁷ *Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester*. Ed. W. de Gray Birch, (London-Winchester, 1892), p.11; ff. 13r-v; Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', in *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Carola Hicks (Stamford, 1992), pp. 231-2: 'In this due order follow the names of the brethren and monks as well as friends and benefactors, that they be inscribed into the pages of the heavenly book by the *temporalem recordationem* of this script: that is the names of those, by whose alms this community in Christ is daily nourished. And all who commend themselves to the prayers and fraternity of this community are written into this book so that their commemoration be performed daily in holy mass and psalms. And these names are to be presented *per singulos dies* by the subdeacon in front of the altar at matins and the main mass, and they are to be read'.

⁷⁵⁸ W. de Gray Birch, *Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey Register*, p. 4; Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', p. 232.

miniature of the *Liber Vitae* stands as a testimony to the lavish donations to churches in England and abroad by King Cnut and Queen Emma.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us that Queen Emma gave the relic of the head of St Valentine to the New Minster for the salvation of the soul of her son Harthacnut, who was buried in the same year at the Old Minster.⁷⁵⁹ Queen Emma also used to donate books. Among other gifts, the queen gave 'a gospel book [*textus*] similarly of gold' to Christchurch, Canterbury.⁷⁶⁰ She also gave 'a large psalter decorated with various pictures' to her brother Robert, archbishop of Rouen.⁷⁶¹ It seems that Queen Emma, who was a very generous donor to monastic foundations, encouraged King Cnut to give sumptuous gifts to the Church.

Cnut himself became well known for his piety and his precious donations to monastic foundations, which included relics, church ornaments, manuscripts and land. Apart from gifts to English institutions, Cnut also sent gifts to foreign churches and to religious and secular leaders.⁷⁶² His fame as a generous donor soon travelled outside England. The king donated books to several parts of Europe.⁷⁶³ It is said that the king sent to Duke William of Aquitaine an illustrated book of saints written in gold.⁷⁶⁴ Also associated with Cnut is a lavishly decorated gospel book made at and for Christchurch, Canterbury.⁷⁶⁵ It probably originally

⁷⁵⁹ ASC 1042 (F) See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 235, no. 5.

⁷⁶⁰ Thomas Heslop, 'The Production of *de luxe* Manuscripts and the Patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma', *ASE* 19 (1990), p. 157.

⁷⁶¹ See M. Chibnall, ed. and trans., *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, (Oxford 1969-80), III, p. 42.

⁷⁶² Thomas A. Heslop, 'The Production of *de luxe* Manuscripts and the Patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma' *ASE* 19 (1990), pp. 151-95.

⁷⁶³ Robert Deshman, 'Anglo-Saxon Art after Alfred', *Art Bulletin* 56 (1974), pp. 176-200.

⁷⁶⁴ In bk. III of the *Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall, 6 vols (Oxford 1969-80), II, pp. 98 and 277, n. 77.

⁷⁶⁵ Nicholas Brooks, *Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984); Thomas Heslop, 'The Production of *de luxe* Manuscripts and the Patronage of King Cnut and Queen Emma', *ASE* 19

contained images of the four Evangelists, which would have faced the surviving incipit images. The king sent books to Cologne and gave donations for the rebuilding of Chartres Cathedral 'so that he might place the—grace of his remembrance among those people.'⁷⁶⁶

In 1020, Fulbert, Bishop of Chartres, sent a letter to Cnut praising the king for his generosity and faith since, he wrote, 'you whom we heard to be a prince of pagans, we acknowledge not only to be a Christian, but a most generous benefactor to churches and to the servants of God'.⁷⁶⁷ And further on:

When we saw the gift you conferred on us, we were amazed at your wisdom, and equally at your piety...when we perceived that you, whom I had heard to be a ruler of pagans, not only of Christians, are also a most gracious benefactor of churches and Servants of God.⁷⁶⁸

With the same enthusiastic praise, the author of the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* refers to Cnut's generosity:

What church does not even now rejoice in his [Cnut's] gifts! Not to mention what he did for those in his own kingdom, Italy daily blesses

(1990); Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', in *England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1992), pp. 219-38; David N. Dumville, *English Caroline Script and Monastic History: Studies in Benedictism, A. D. 950-1030*, SASH 6 (Woodbridge, 1993), pp. 116-28, 139-40; John Lowden 'The Royal Manuscript as Idea and Object', in *Royal Manuscripts: The Genius of Illumination*, eds. Scot McKendrick, John Lowden, Kathleen Doyle (London, 2011), pp. 19-41.

<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminated-manuscripts>

⁷⁶⁶ Dorothy Whitelock, ed. and trans., 'Letter of Fulbert, bishop of Chartres to King Cnut', in *English Historical Documents 500-1042* (London, 1955), p. 825.

⁷⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 825.

⁷⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

the soul of that man, Gaul asks for it to enjoy good things, and above all, Flanders prays for it to rejoice in heaven with Christ—for crossing these countries he sought Rome.⁷⁶⁹

The account suggests that the king's gifts were exchanged for prayers for his soul. King Cnut's concern for reconciliation with the Christian church is also suggested in William of Malmesbury. He argues that the king's eagerness to restore and found churches expressed his attempt to reconcile himself with the English church—and his fear of God since, in the past, he had destroyed and pillaged the country as a fierce invader: 'Thus anxious to atone for the offences of himself and of his predecessors, perhaps he wiped away the foul stain of former crimes in the sight of God—certainly he did so with man.'⁷⁷⁰ According to William of Malmesbury, Cnut 'repaired the monasteries throughout England, partly damaged or partly destroyed by his and his father's expeditions.'⁷⁷¹ It seems reasonable to argue that such reparations would have helped Cnut to establish himself in ecclesiastical circles as a pious Christian ruler who sought God's forgiveness for the destruction and pillaging of the churches and monasteries in England.

King Cnut and the Church

It was mainly through Christianity and marriage that Cnut tried to strengthen his throne in England. As stated earlier, it was important for Cnut to establish a strong relationship with the Anglo-Saxon church to reinforce his

⁷⁶⁹ A. Campbell and Simon Keynes, eds., *Encomium Emmae Reginae* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 37.

⁷⁷⁰ William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, ed. W. Stubbs, RS I (London, 1887), pp. 219-20.

⁷⁷¹ *Ibid.*

position as a Christian king and defuse the political difficulties caused by him being a foreigner.⁷⁷² Cnut's lavish donations to the church and his presence in Anglo-Saxon commemoration sources show that the king aspired to present himself as an ideal Christian king.

Adam of Bremen in his *Gesta episcoporum* of Hamburg and Bremen (+1081) records that Cnut was baptized with the Christian name *Lambertus* but he does not mention the time and place of Cnut's baptism.⁷⁷³ He also maintains that Cnut, Emma, and their son Harthacnut were inscribed with this name in the Bremen Confraternity book.⁷⁷⁴ Anglo-Saxon commemoration lists feature the names of King Cnut, Queen Emma, members of the royal family, as well as some Danish names. In an obituary of New Minster in the Breviary of Abbot Ælfwinus (BL, Cotton MS, Titus D. xxvii) under the date of 12 November, we find *Obitus Cnud rex* and, under the date of 7 March *Imma obit regina*.⁷⁷⁵

In the Anglo-Norman *Liber Vitae* of Thorney Abbey, the first list (fol. 10r), opens with *rex Cnut*, followed by his sons Harold and Harthacnut, as well as *Imma regina et Ælfgifu*. The manuscript also features the names of five of Cnut's Danish

⁷⁷² Frank Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 396.

⁷⁷³ Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, Francis J. Tschan, trans. (New York, 1959), Book II, iii, p. 56 and scholium 37, p. 91.

⁷⁷⁴ Scholia 37 to book II 52 of Adam von Bremen, *Bischofsgeschichte der Hamburger Kirche*, in: *Quellen des 9 und 11. Jahrhunderts zur Geschichte der Hamburger Kirche und des Reiches*, ed. W. Trillmich, R. Buchner, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters*, XI (Darmstadt, 1978), p. 290: *Chnut filius Suein regis abjecto nomine genitilitatis in baptism Lambertus nomen accepit. Unde scriptum est in libro fraternitatis nostrae: 'Lambrecht rex Danorum et Imma regina et Chnut filiuseorum devote se commendaverunt orationibus fratrum Bremensium'*; Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut: The Liturgical Commemoration of a Conqueror', pp. 235-6. For his baptism, see Lawrence M. Larson, *Canute the Great 995 (circ.)-1035: And the Rise of Danish Imperialism during the Viking Age* (New York, 1912), p. 164f. Lambert was a martyr saint from Liège and his feast was on the 17 September.

⁷⁷⁵ For the obit-notes, see Jan Gerchow, 'Prayers for King Cnut', pp. 233-44 and pp. 332-5.

earls and twenty nine housecarls.⁷⁷⁶ Again in Cnut's Gospel Book at Christ Church Canterbury (BL Royal MS I.D. ix, f. 43v), the name of the king and his brother, Harold, are included in the confraternity, together with the names of three other Danes, Thorth, Kartoca, Thuri, who are presented as brothers of the monks.⁷⁷⁷ Several Danish names appear also in the *Liber Vitae* of the New Minster.⁷⁷⁸

The presence of Danish names in commemoration lists suggests that King Cnut encouraged his compatriots to join the Christian faith—an act which would also prove beneficial for reconciliation between the English and the Danes since there was no doubt that a certain degree of hostility existed between the two people. On the thirteenth of November 1002, on St Brice's Day, King Æthelred had ordered the killing of all Danish people in England.⁷⁷⁹ The massacre probably provoked Swein's invasion in 1003.

The hostility towards the Danish is obvious in Wulfstan's famous sermon *Sermon of the Wolf to the English* delivered in 1014.⁷⁸⁰ In the sermon, Bishop Wulfstan condemned the English people for their moral weaknesses and he also

⁷⁷⁶ Dorothy Whitelock, 'Scandinavian Personal Names in the *Liber Vitae* of Thorney Abbey', *Saga Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research* 12 (1945), pp. 127-53.

⁷⁷⁷ For the text see Neil R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), no. 247a: *In nomine domini nostril iesu cristi. Her is awritten CNUTES. Kynges nama is ure leofa hlaforð for worulde, and ure gastlica broðor for gode, and Harold thaes kings broðor. Throth ure broðor Kartoca ure brotheror. Thuri ure brothe'.*

⁷⁷⁸ In the list of Benefactors *Nomina familiariorum vel benefactorum* of the New Minster *Liber Vitae*, fol. 25r: *Thored Danus, Toui Danus, Toca Danus*, see Simon Keynes, ed., *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey Winchester: British Library Stowe 944, together with leaves from British Library Cotton Vespasian A. VIII and British Library Cotton Titus D. XXVII*. 1996. Ed. Simon Keynes. EEMF, 26 (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger).

⁷⁷⁹ ASC (C, D, E) 1002 See Dorothy Whitelock, ed., *EHD* (London, 1955), p. 217.

⁷⁸⁰ Wulfstan, '*Sermo Lupi ad Anglos: The Sermon of the Wolf to the English*', in *English Historical Documents c. 500-1042*, ed. Dorothy Whitelock (London, 1955), pp. 855-8.

objected to the payment of the tribute to the Danes, calling the tribute 'shameful' and the Danes 'heathens and pirates'.⁷⁸¹

Cnut's attempts at reconciliation between the English and the Danes started early. In the Oxford meeting in 1018, Cnut set it as his objective to make the Danes and English follow the laws of Edgar and live peacefully together.⁷⁸² Later in 1023, according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Cnut granted Bishop Æthelnoth permission to translate the remains of the martyred Ælfheah from St Paul's in London to Christchurch in Canterbury.⁷⁸³ A large group of clergy and lay people assisted, including Cnut himself in London and Emma and Harthacnut in Canterbury.⁷⁸⁴ However, the translation was 'gratifyingly displeasing to [the people] of London. Michael Lawson suggests that King Cnut allowed this translation to alleviate hostility toward Danes in London.'⁷⁸⁵

Cnut's respectful attitude towards the Anglo-Saxon church and his close relationship with prelates suggest that it was vital to have the church on his side for the establishment of his rule in England. Cnut was crowned king by

⁷⁸¹ Wulfstan became archbishop of York in 1003. Previous to being named archbishop, he had been bishop of London since 996; see ASC (F) 996, Dorothy Whitelock, EHD, p. 214. Wulfstan may have had some association with Ely since he was well regarded and was buried there when he died in 1023; see Dom David Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke, and Vera C. M. London, *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales, 940-1216* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 44-6. See also 'The Sermon of the Wolf to the English', in EHD, ed. D. Whitelock, pp. 854-9. The question has been raised whether these laws were really a reflection of the legal realities of the time or merely a record of archiepiscopal preaching.

⁷⁸² Michael K. Lawson, *Cnut: The Danes in England in the Early Eleventh Century* (New York, 1993), p. 60-1.

⁷⁸³ Ælfheah was Bishop of Winchester and in 1006 became Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1011, he was captured by Danish invaders at Canterbury and was killed by them in 1012. Ælfheah was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral; see Henrietta Leyser, s.v. 'Ælfheah (d. 1012)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

⁷⁸⁴ The ASC (C, D, E, F) 1023 See Dorothy Whitelock, ed., EHD, pp. 229-230.

⁷⁸⁵ Michael K. Lawson, *Cnut: The Danes in England in the Early Eleventh Century*, p. 141-3.

Archbishop Lyfing, who held the see of Canterbury at that time.⁷⁸⁶ According to William of Malmesbury, Æthelnoth, who succeeded Lyfing in 1020, was an advisor to Cnut.⁷⁸⁷ According to the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, Æthelnoth went to see Cnut at Shaftesbury before the king's death in 1035.⁷⁸⁸ Cnut asked the archbishop to ensure that his son Harthacnut would succeed him according to the premarital arrangement with Emma.⁷⁸⁹

Æthelnoth kept his promise to Cnut and, against the witan's decision, he not only refused to consecrate and crown Harald but neither did he allow any English bishop to crown him.⁷⁹⁰ Following King Edgar's steps, Cnut protected the Church and continued the monastic reform that Edgar had started. As early as 1017, Cnut commanded Wulfstan to remodel Gloucester as a Benedictine

⁷⁸⁶ Lyfing began his monastic career at Glastonbury; see William of Malmesbury, *The Antiquities of Glastonbury*, trans. Frank Lomax (Llanerch, facsimile reprint, 1992), p. 112.

⁷⁸⁷ '[E]ncouraging even the king himself in his good actions by the authority of his sanctity, and restraining him in his excesses'; see John A. Giles, William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings*, Ed., John A. Giles (London, 1847), p. 202. Æthelnoth had begun his monastic career at Glastonbury and had been Prior of Christ Church. He was member of the Anglo-Saxon royalty as his father was the Ealdorman; see George Smith, s.v. 'Æthelnoth', *The Dictionary of National Biography*. In 1022, Æthelnoth went to Rome to receive his pallium. ASC (C, D, E, F) 1022 'And Archbishop Æthelnoth went to Rome, and was there received by Benedict, the venerable pope, with great worship; and he with his own hands, placed the pall upon him, and very honourably hallowed him archbishop and blessed him on the Nones of October (Oct 7). And the archbishop there with immediately, on the same day sang mass; and then after, with the pope himself, honourably took refection, and also of himself took the pall from St. Peter's altar and then joyfully went home to his own country'. See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 229.

⁷⁸⁸ Alistair Campbell, ed., *Encomium Emmae Reginae* (Cambridge, 1998) xxv, lxiii.

⁷⁸⁹ John W. Lamb, *The Archbishopric of Canterbury, from its Foundation to the Norman Conquest* (London, 1971), p. 226. Cnut and Ælfifu of Northumbria had two sons, Harald and Svein, who were probably born before Cnut and Emma were married in 1017. Emma was very concerned to obtain an agreement that any son of hers would inherit Cnut's kingdom ahead of any sons he might have by other women. Since, at the time he married Emma, Cnut only held England, he may later have felt free to make arrangements for his other family as he did for Svein in Norway without breaking his sworn agreement. For this discussion, see Miles W. Campbell, 'Queen Emma and Ælfifu of Northampton: Canute the Great's Women', *Medieval Scandinavia* 4 (1971), p. 67.

⁷⁹⁰ *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, A. Campbell and S. Keynes (Cambridge, 1998) iii, 1.

monastery.⁷⁹¹ Wulfstan himself was probably involved in a reform against clerical abuses in the North, known as the Law of Northumbrian Priests.⁷⁹² Cnut's active involvement in ecclesiastical matters is also evident in the case of Brihtwine, whose appointment as bishop in the See of Sherborne around 1014 did not please the king, who later expelled Brihtwine in favour of Ælmar.⁷⁹³ Cnut also negotiated for a resolution to the competition between the archdioceses of Canterbury and Hamburg-Bremen for superiority over the Danish dioceses.

3.6.3 Pilgrimage to Rome

Trying to improve the conditions for pilgrims to Rome, as well as merchants, King Cnut asked for the abolishment or reduction of the toll tax and more safety on the road.⁷⁹⁴

I spoke with the Emperor himself and the Lord Pope and the princes there about the needs of all people of my entire realm, both English and Danes, that a juster law and securer peace might be granted to them on the road to Rome and that they should not be straitened by so many barriers along the road, and harassed by unjust tolls; and the Emperor agreed and likewise King Robert who governs most of these same toll

⁷⁹¹ Dorothy Whitelock, ed., 'Letter of Fulbert, bishop of Chartres, to King Cnut', in *EHD* (London, 1955), p. 825.

⁷⁹² Dorothy Whitelock, ed., 'The Law of Northumbrian Priests', in *EHD* (London, 1955), pp. 434-9.

⁷⁹³ John W. Lamb, *The Archbishopric of Canterbury* (London, 1971), p. 223. About 1020, the bishops of England had sent a letter to the Pope. This letter discussed the issue of who had the right to ordain English archbishops and argued that, according to ancient custom, the surviving archbishop in England consecrated the new one. The letter also protested the huge fees that were extorted from the archbishops for their *pallium* using the argument that they were a form of simony which was forbidden; see Dorothy Whitelock, M. Brett and C. N. L. Brooke, eds., *Councils and Synods with other Documents Relating to the English Church*. Vol. 1 (Oxford, 1981), pp. 441-7.

⁷⁹⁴ Dorothy Whitelock, ed., 'Cnut's letter of 1027', in *EHD* (1955), pp. 416-8.

gates. And all the merchants confirmed by edict that my people, both merchants, and the others who travel to make their devotions, might go to Rome and return without being afflicted by barriers and toll collectors, in firm peace and secure in a just law.

Cnut's pilgrimage to Rome in 1027 has been interpreted as a sign of his piety and Christian faith.⁷⁹⁵ But it has also been questioned whether Cnut went to Rome on pilgrimage or for the coronation of Emperor Conrad II and other political matters. However, in the letter he addressed to the English people from Rome in 1027, the king stressed the spiritual aspect of his journey to Rome and his closeness to St Peter:

I make it known to you that I have recently been to Rome, to pray for the remission of my sins...Especially I have accomplished this because I learned from wise men that the holy Apostle Peter had received from the Lord great power to bind and to lose, and was the keeper of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and I considered it very profitable diligently to seek his special favour before God.⁷⁹⁶

Cnut's reference and plea to St Peter 'the keeper of keys of the kingdom of heaven' to be his intercessor before God echoes the iconography of the prefatory miniature in the *Liber Vitae* with King Cnut depicted below St Peter, patron of the

⁷⁹⁵ The English chroniclers all placed the date of Cnut's trip to Rome in 1031. If we believe Cnut's letter that he addressed to the English people from Rome, he was there during the coronation of Conrad II as Holy Roman Emperor. According to Hampe, this event occurred in 1027 and that was the only time that Conrad was in Rome. See Karl Hampe, *Germany Under the Salian and Hohenstaufen Emperors*, trans., Ralph Bennet (Totowa, 1973).

⁷⁹⁶ Dorothy Whitelock, ed., 'Cnut's letter of 1027', in *EHD* (1955), pp. 416-8.

New Minster. An outline drawing in an Anglo-Saxon prayer book, produced in Winchester, in c.1023-35 (BL, Cotton MS Titus D. xxvi, fol. 19v) depicts St Peter enthroned holding a large key and an open book in his right. The tiny figure of the monk Ælfwine appears as a suppliant on the right of the saint. Looking upwards to the saint, Ælfwine holds a closed book in his left hand and raises his right hand in a gesture possibly of appeal (fig. 42).

King Cnut's letter was probably written by the abbot of Tavistock, Lyfing, who was with the king in Rome and took the letter to England. In Cnut's letter, only his archbishops, Æthelnoth of Canterbury and Ælfric of York, were addressed by name.⁷⁹⁷ In his first letter to the English people, written earlier in 1019-20 when the king was out of the country, Cnut proclaimed himself 'King of all England and Denmark and the Norwegians and of some of the Swedes.'⁷⁹⁸ In this letter, only Thorkell the Tall was addressed personally. Both letters express the king's faith in God and his concern about the wellbeing of his people and the safety of his country.

King Cnut's concern for the salvation of his soul is expressed in the iconography of the prefatory miniature in the *Liber Vitae* with the depiction of the royal couple as God's elects: lifted as they are above the rest of the congregation and receiving divine rewards, the crown and the veil. Similar ideas are conveyed in the following outline drawings depicting scenes from the Last Judgement while also agreeing with the nature of the manuscript—a *Liber Vitae*. The prefatory

⁷⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 416-8.

⁷⁹⁸ In his letter to the English people in 1020, Cnut referred to a letter he had received from the pope which 'Archbishop Lyfing brought me from Rome'. See 'Cnut's Letter to the people of England 1019-1020', in *EHD*, ed. Whitelock, p. 415.

miniature suggests a hallowed milieu, a sacred *topos*, which prefigures a blessed meeting between royal and divine authorities. Accordingly, it also gives promise of salvation to the monastic community of the New Minster depicted in the miniature.

The prefatory miniature stages the prefiguration of a great future event anticipated by the royal couple: the pious King Cnut with Queen Emma will be taken by God on the day of Judgement and as Elijah and Enoch in the Old Testament they will not face death. The scene suggests a visual commemoration of the pious Anglo-Saxon rulers who aspire 'to walk with God'. The iconography of the prefatory miniature suggests St Augustine's ideal of the *Civitas Dei* and visually reiterates the words of Paul in his epistle to Thessalonians, written in Corinth, shortly after his departure from Thessalonica:

Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.⁷⁹⁹

⁷⁹⁹ 1 Th. 11:18.

CONCLUSION

In tracing the iconography of three late Anglo-Saxon miniatures, which depict the crowned kings Æthelstan, Edgar and Cnut standing in reverence before sacred and divine authorities, this study sought to examine the relationship between kingship, God and the Church in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Focusing on the iconography of Anglo-Saxon monarchy in relation to its historical context and theological ideas of the period, the thesis has reconsidered the way in which the compositions in question have been understood and interpreted in the literature.

Basing its argument primarily on the fact that the kings are depicted in reverent attitudes before the sacred authorities and separated from the rest of Christianity, this study suggests that, unlike other presentation scenes, these three prefatory miniatures are designed to convey a different type of message to viewers. The iconography stresses the power of intercession in the Anglo-Saxon monarch's plea for salvation. The miniatures appear to use the presentation scene as a pretext for showcasing the personal spirituality of the Anglo-Saxon monarch: in particular, the iconography portrays the king in an exclusive relationship with sacred and divine authorities and, consequently, suggests emphatically a royal path to salvation for the anointed king.

In revaluating the iconography in question in the course of the discussion, the following themes proved crucial: the model of kingship as already provided in the Bible and reconstructed in contemporary written sources, the king's active involvement in ecclesiastical matters and the coronation ceremony, which set the monarch apart from the rest of the Christians. Special emphasis was placed on each monarch's personal efforts to achieve spiritual provisions that would facilitate his path to salvation, namely wisdom through book learning and the

company of wise people, as well as donations in exchange for prayers and liturgical commemoration.

By humbling themselves before sacred and divine authorities with symbols of wisdom and faith in their hands—namely, books and a cross—the three crowned kings plead for salvation. Seen from this point of view, the focus of the iconographic vocabulary is the fervent spirituality of the Anglo-Saxon monarch, which renders him an ideal candidate for salvation. Thus, the depiction of King Æthelstan with an open book in his hands shows the Anglo-Saxon monarch in the favourable light of a wise ruler involved in a spiritual act, that of reading, which should facilitate his path to Heaven. Likewise, the closed book in King Edgar's hand similarly suggests a wise ruler, who turns himself to God in a similarly spiritual act, the act of praying. Lastly, holding the cross in one hand and the sword in the other, King Cnut is engaged in an act of faith: he presents himself as a faithful sovereign, who, aspiring to salvation, declares his faith and submits himself to God's judgment in front of the monastic congregation.

In the Anglo-Saxon period, the Bible provided the model and the justification of Christian kingship, particularly the stories of the patriarchs and leaders in the Old Testament. There, the concept of kingship in relation to God was lucidly presented with the juxtaposition of good kings, such as David and Solomon, with bad ones, such as Saul. As discussed earlier, the king's divine right to rule can also be traced in Anglo-Saxon writings, dated as early as the ninth century.

The practice and justification of tithing in the Anglo-Saxon period is an example of a custom taking its model from the Bible. In the *Tithe Ordinance*, King

Æthelstan's quotations from the Old Testament relating to Jacob and Moses are clearly chosen to support the practice of tithing.⁸⁰⁰ Stories in the Bible, such as the Widow's mite, would have encouraged Anglo-Saxons, especially the devout poor to give money to the church. Occasionally, references to the Bible also appear in royal charters and laws. For example, the despised figure of Judas is cited from the New Testament as a model for the punishment of King Æthelstan's enemies. The royal threat of the awful end on the Day of Judgement—'he will burn with Judas'—awaiting anyone who dared disobey royal orders shows clearly that the Anglo-Saxon king's enemies were regarded as God's enemies.

Another section in the Bible wholly embraced by the Anglo-Saxon elite was that of the genealogy. Its concept and structure was frequently imitated in Anglo-Saxon manuscripts in the form of royal lists, episcopal lists and Anglo-Saxon genealogies. Genealogies linked the pagan past with the Christian present in a long uninterrupted line, sometimes starting from Adam. The miniatures of King Æthelstan and King Cnut feature in manuscripts which contain genealogies and regnal lists. The succession of the earthly kings in these lists conveys the idea that it was God's intention to have his people ruled by kings who were his delegates on earth. In addition, the memorial character of both genealogies and regnal lists links them with the liturgical commemoration recited in the Church.

Contemporary writings too, including proems to the law codes, charters, sermons, homilies and treatises, give an insight into of the function and duties of an Anglo-Saxon king. In the *Institutes of Polity*, Wulfstan provided the definition of kingship: 'For a Christian king is Christ's deputy among Christian people.'⁸⁰¹ The

⁸⁰⁰ Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1999), p. 306.

⁸⁰¹ VIII Æthelred 2/1; A. J. Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 118; Karl

first section of his treatise focused on the heavenly king and the second on the earthly king. The constant parallels drawn between the heavenly and the earthly king suggest that the Anglo-Saxon king was modelled on the former. Wulfstan made a conscious and sustained effort to promote earthly kingship as a spiritual office and to portray the Anglo-Saxon monarch in a special relationship to the Divine King. As a result of such efforts, any indication of division between state and church in the late Anglo-Saxon period is found entirely erased.

Wulfstan promotes the image of a well organised, hierarchical Christian society, divided into social ranks: councillors, bishops, earls, reeves, abbots, monks, canons, priests, nuns, widows, God's servants, the laity, the clergy. According to Wulfstan, standing at the top of the hierarchy of the cosmos is the heavenly king—'the true king, and glory of kings that ever were or shall be'—with, below him, the earthly king, 'the comfort of the folc, the righteous herd over all the Christian flock'. The earthly king should have seven attributes: fear of God, love of truth, humility, resolution against evil, the will to succour the poor, to help the Church, and to be equitable in judgment to friend and to foe. His foremost duty is to protect and support God's Church. The treatise firmly advocates the idea that the earthly kingdom should reflect the harmony and order of the heavenly kingdom.

Similar ideas on kingship are voiced in Ælfric's writings. In his famous homily on Palm Sunday, Ælfric voices certain reservations about kingship,

Jost Die, ed., *'Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical': ein werk Erzbischof Wulfstans von York*, (Bern, 1959); Michael Swanton, trans., *Institutes of Polity*, (London, 1975), pp. 126-127.

warning his audience that not all earthly kings mirror the heavenly one.⁸⁰² He suggests that, following his consecration, the earthly king could potentially develop tyrannical qualities. Similar concerns about kingship had been expressed by Samuel in the Old Testament, when the Israelites asked for a king. The prophet's reservations were confirmed when, Saul, chosen as king by God and anointed by Samuel, subsequently proved to be a bad king who did not obey God.

Such reservations, ever-present in the minds of the Anglo-Saxons thanks to the authority of Biblical sources, fostered the idea that the earthly king had to work hard for his office in order to prove that he truly reflected the heavenly king and served his people. In the grant by King Ceowulf I of Mercia to Archbishop Wulfred at Witenagemot, on occasion of the royal consecration, is very clearly declared that the kings are not only under God's protection but also under God's domination: 'It must be noted again that kings gain their realms by God's favour and lose them by His disfavour.'⁸⁰³ Thus, it was very important for the Anglo-Saxon monarch to present himself consistently as God's favoured king. This is precisely the notion that the iconography of the three prefatory miniatures showing the Anglo-Saxon ruler as God's elect, separated from the rest of the congregation and elevated towards the divine sphere, seeks to advocate.

The frequent presence of books in the iconography of the prefatory miniatures reflects Wulfstan's ideas, illustrating the close relationship between

⁸⁰² 'Homily on the Palm Sunday' in *The Homilies of Ælfric*, ed. and trans. B. Thorpe, vol. I (London, 1844-6), p. 212; *English Historical Documents*, c. 500-1042, D. Whitelock, I, no. 239 (b), pp. 925-6.

⁸⁰³ Grant by King Ceowulf I of Mercia to Archbishop Wulfred, September 17 A.D. 822. See Walter de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London, 1885-1893), no. 370; A. W. Haddan and W. Stubbs, eds., *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 1871), III, p.589; William A. Chaney, *The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England: The Transition from Paganism to Christianity* (Manchester, 1970), p. 249.

literacy and kingship in the Anglo-Saxon period and confirming the indispensable role of the book in the promulgation of the Christian faith. In this respect, images of books within books served to further emphasise the book itself as an object. In sharp contrast, books are not present at all in the iconography of Anglo-Saxon coinage. The dominant Christian symbol on the reverse of the late Anglo-Saxon coinage is the cross rather than the book. The supremacy of the cross over the book on the coinage may suggest a conscious attempt to link with and, thus, protect the coin, the product of the king's law, through the means of the apotropaic power of the cross.

Books transmitted knowledge and spread the Word of God. They were, therefore, closely related with wisdom and men of wisdom who were seen, according to the Christian hierarchy, as standing closer to God. Consequently, by holding books or by being surrounded by them, the Anglo-Saxon kings become associated with all wise men, especially with the wise kings in the Old Testament, such as King Solomon and King David, but also with King Alfred in the Anglo-Saxon period, who could read and translate texts.

As shown above, in the *Institutes of Polity*, Wulfstan presents spirituality as an essential requirement in successful kingship: kings ought to nurture their spiritual strength. He argues that, just as the body grow weak for lack of proper nourishment, so does the soul without proper spiritual food. By 'spiritual food' Wulfstan means books, prayers and the company of wise people. He emphasises the importance of wisdom and book-learning in kingship as ways of enhancing the ruler's spiritual strength. His treatise not only encourages the presence of wise men in the court but also urges the king himself to show proper obedience to God by seeking their advice. After stressing the importance of wisdom in kingship, Wulfstan urges the king to promote book-learning for, through his wisdom and

patronage, his people will be happy, healthy and victorious. By contrast, a king, according to Wulfstan, should act resolutely against heathenism and consult regularly with wise men if he wishes to pay proper obedience to God.⁸⁰⁴

The close interaction between state and the Church has also been seen by scholars to be reflected in the iconography of late Anglo-Saxon coinage. As shown in some detail earlier in this thesis, the obverse of coins generally depicts the royal bust in profile, followed by a legend with the title of the king; the reverse, by contrast, is dominated by the symbol of the cross, placed as it were in the centre. Occasionally, other Christian symbols appear, alongside the cross, on the reverse, such as the *Manus Dei* and/or the *Agnus Dei*. The iconography of the coinage of the period confirmed the notion of a Christian society solidly organised around kingship and protected by God.

The main characteristics of the close interaction between kingship, the Church and God were formed in the Frankish kingdoms under Peppin and Charles the Great. The Frankish kings played a leading role in of their relationship with the church and offered it strong protection. In turn, the Church was actively involved in political matters and reinforced kingship with further spiritual endorsements, primarily among these the coronation ceremony. The development of the coronation ceremony, with the incorporation of the anointing as an integral part of the ritual, established kingship as ordained and protected by God. By the tenth century, the king legally and constitutionally undertook the responsibility to defend the Church against its enemies and to request justice for all Christians.⁸⁰⁵

⁸⁰⁴ Karl Jost, ed., *Die 'Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical': ein werk Erzbischof Wulfstans von York*. (Bern, 1959); Michael Swanton, trans., *Institutes of Polity*, Everyman's Library 1819 (London, 1975), pp. 126-127.

⁸⁰⁵ Henry Loyn, *The Government of Anglo-Saxon England 500-1087* (London, 1984), p. 82.

In the late Anglo-Saxon period, the relationship between kingship and the Church presented the same main characteristics as those of already the Frankish kingdoms. The Anglo-Saxon king was predominantly a Christian king. He was God's elect and anointed and his kingship was ordained and protected by God. The king protected the Church and collaborated closely with bishops and prelates in state matters. Prelates were actively involved in the making of the law and their names featured regularly under the king's name in charters, grants and writs.

According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, in 853, King Alfred the Great was sent, at the age of five, to Rome where he was confirmed by Pope Leo IV, who 'anointed him as a king'. It is in this manner that the *Chronicle* set forward this anticipatory coronation regardless of the fact that Alfred had at the time three living elder brothers. Alfred's anointing in Rome resembles the anointing of King David as a young boy by the prophet Zadoc during the reign of King Saul.

In all three prefatory pages, the royal status of the Anglo-Saxon monarchs is clearly denoted by their distinctive crowns. We can only speculate about the reason why only King Edgar's delayed and, probably, second coronation at Pentecost in 973, in Bath, was described in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and other twelfth-century sources, while there is little reference to the coronations of King Æthelstan and Cnut. The public character and imperial overtones of Edgar's coronation may suggest that the ceremony was staged as a grand finale to the king's successful ecclesiastical and coinage reforms. The public scale of Edgar's coronation may also perhaps account for its prominent place in the *Chronicle* and later sources. Following the second *ordo*, the coronation ceremony emphasised especially the anointing of the king, which set him apart from the rest of Christianity. As shown earlier, imperial titles such as 'basileos anglorum et rex atque imperator...regum et nationum infra fines brittaniae commorantium' also

appeared in Edgar's charters. It should be remembered too that the Benedictional of Æthelwold presents an imperial iconography of Christ drawing distinctive parallels between the Anglo-Saxon king and the Son of God.⁸⁰⁶

King Æthelstan's coronation, like Cnut's, is not described in detail in primary or in later sources. The reason for such brief mentions may be that they both lacked any significant public character. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* provides only a reference to King Cnut's election and acclamation. It is significant, though, that Cnut is the only Anglo-Saxon king depicted in a miniature being crowned by an angel. King Æthelstan's belated consecration took place over a year after his succession to the throne. The reason for the delay is not clear. However, the coronation occurred on the same day as the translation feast of Saint Cuthbert, on 4 September. It may be argued that the date of Æthelstan's coronation, on 4 September 925, was deliberately chosen to further emphasise the close relationship between the king and the saint. The prefatory miniature in the *Vitae Sancto Cuthberti* and the miniature in the lost gospel-book, Cotton MS Otho B.ix, stand as witnesses to this close relationship between the king and the saint.

It has been argued that King Æthelstan was anointed with the second Anglo-Saxon *ordo* that was being used for the first time. In the prayer of the *ordo*, the hereditary right of the West Saxon kings to rule Britain was emphasised in the following words: 'Stand and hold fast now the position that you have held up to this time by your father's suggestion, and which is delegated to you by hereditary right'.⁸⁰⁷ The prayer is not dissimilar to the miracle story of King Alfred and St

⁸⁰⁶ Robert Deshman, 'Christus rex et magi reges: Kinship and Christology in Ottonian and Anglo-Saxon Art' *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 10 (1976), pp. 367-405. For a cogent commentary on Edgar's imperial position, see esp. pp. 390-400.

⁸⁰⁷ Paul L. Ward, 'An Early Version of the Anglo-Saxon Coronation Ceremony', *English Historical Review* (1942), pp. 345-61.

Cuthbert in the *Historia*, in which the saint had promised the rule of all of Britain to the king and his descendants.⁸⁰⁸

King Æthelstan's coins, charters, grants and laws reflected his political ideology and his close relationship with God for public consumption. In 930, King Æthelstan struck a coin bearing the style *rex to(tius) Brit(anniae)*. In one of the charters, dated 29 April 930, the king is qualified as 'rex Anglorum...totius Bryttanniae regni solio sublimatus'.⁸⁰⁹ In his grants and charters, he presents himself as a Christian sovereign, who has long ruled with his councillors and bishops and whose kingship is ordained and protected by God. The same ideas prevail in Æthelstan's grant of Amounderness: 'I Æthelstan, king of the English, elevated by the right hand of the Almighty, which is Christ, to the throne of the whole kingdom of Britain'.⁸¹⁰

The involvement of the Anglo-Saxon kings in ecclesiastical matters was expressed in a range of different manners: laws that supported the church, close co-operation between royalty and archbishops in monastic reform, donations of land and the appointment of archbishops by the king. By the tenth century, each church was placed under the protection of God and of the king.⁸¹¹ The church was in turn actively involved in the politics of the period. For instance, Wulfstan,

⁸⁰⁸ In the miracle story of King Alfred and St Cuthbert, the saint promises to 'tibi et filiis tuis data est tota Albion [...] quia tu es electus rex totius Britannia'. See Ted Johnson South, ed., *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, ch. 16 (2002), pp. 54 and 56.

⁸⁰⁹ A. S. Napier and W. H. Stevenson, eds, *The Crawford Collection of Early Charters and Documents* (Oxford, 1895), pp. 5-9 and 65-80. See also Peter H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography* (London, 1968), no. 405.

⁸¹⁰ Grant by King Æthelstan of Amounderness, June 7, A.D. 934 (Birch, 1344), in D. Whitelock, ed. and trans., *EHD*, p. 506.

⁸¹¹ No church was to be brought under subjection; see Henry R. Loyn, 'Church and State in England in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries', in D. Parsons, ed., *Tenth-Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and Regularis Concordia* (Chichester, 1975), ch. 7, p. 99.

archbishop of York and adviser in legal matters for King Æthelred and, later, for King Cnut, had a central role both in Church and state.⁸¹²

King Edgar's close interaction with the church was evident in his monastic reform, in which the king collaborated closely with the three most prominent prelates of the period, Dunstan, Æthelwold and Oswald. Issued in 966 by King Edgar, the gold-lettered refoundation charter for the New Minster emphasised the importance of the installation of monks at the New Minster and the interdependence of monks and king. Æthelwold's pupil, Ælfric of Eynsham, maintained that the clerks were expelled from the Old and New Minsters by bishop Æthelwold with King Edgar's authorisation.⁸¹³

As we have seen, in the prefatory miniature of the document, King Edgar is depicted alone, surrounded only by divine authorities. Flanked by St Peter and the Virgin Mary, the king is in process of prostrating himself in all his royal glory before Christ in Majesty. The following year, 967, Edgar once more expressed his full support for the Church in his address to an Anglo-Saxon Synod. There, the king declared that he was eager to take up 'the sword of Constantine' and observe Episcopal orders. Furthermore, the account of Edgar's establishment of the Benedictine Order in the monastic houses—most likely written by Æthelwold and also found in the proem of the *Regularis Concordia*—records the respectful relationship between the king and his prelates. The illumination depicting King Edgar enthroned between Æthelwold and Dunstan and holding a scroll, possibly the Rule, represents emphatically this harmonious and successful collaboration (fig. 37).

⁸¹² Wulfstan's prose style can be detected in the law-codes of both King Æthelred and King Cnut.

⁸¹³ J. Stevenson, ed., *Historia Monasterii de Abingdon*, RS, (London, 1858), ii, p. 260.

As has already been argued in this thesis, any visible act of royal donation in the prefatory miniatures serves predominantly a greater objective—the royal plea for salvation expressed in the figure of the monarch humbling himself before sacred and divine authorities. Separated from the rest of the people and elevated upwards to the divine sphere, the ruler is presented as the closest in line for salvation. The Anglo-Saxon king's preoccupation with salvation found expression in various royal donations to monastic houses in exchange for prayers. The inscriptions within the books that King Æthelstan gave to Christ Church, St Augustine's and Bath Abbey urged the monastic community to pray for the king, stressing that the donation was made for the salvation of the king's soul.⁸¹⁴ Similar preoccupations were expressed by Brihtwold when he granted a small gift to Christ and Virgin Mary at the old church of Glastonbury in the hope of winning 'the sweet delights of eternal life'. Thus, in exchange for donations, the Anglo-Saxon ruler requested prayers for his personal salvation while similar requests were issued with laws, such as the one issued by King Athelstan at Exeter.⁸¹⁵ Moreover, in the *Regularis Concordia*, the special prominence given to the royal family was expressed with the request for prayers not only for the king but also for the queen as part of the daily liturgy of the new Benedictine houses: a total of eighteen psalms, twenty three collects and, usually, the morrow (or early) Mass.

Against this cultural background, the visual representation of Æthelstan, Edgar and Cnut as being blessed by divine and sacred figures—and Cnut also being crowned—confirms the spirituality of the earthly king and his suitability as a monarch. The late Anglo-Saxon iconography of kingship was very much

⁸¹⁴ Richard Gameson, *The Role of Art in the Late Anglo-Saxon Church* (Oxford, 1995), p. 263.

⁸¹⁵ Æthelstan's laws issued at Exeter (V Æthelstan). See Felix Liebermann ed., *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Halle, 1903-1916), vol. I, pp. 166-168.

mediated by the king's preoccupation with the salvation of his soul and it is this that has formed the focal point of the present analysis. A variety of approaches, from iconographical analysis to textual and comparative discussion to conventional historical synthesis, have been adopted to bring together the different aspects that may account for the specific grouping of prefatory miniatures in relation to Anglo-Saxon kingship. The main argument promoted has been that the iconography of the three prefatory miniatures is an expression of the spirituality of Anglo-Saxon monarch and seeks to suggest an exclusive relationship with sacred and divine authorities. The implication is that the anointed king, having the patron saints of the monastic foundations interceding for him with God, has received the sanction of God and is launched on a path to salvation.

APPENDIX: The Representation of Monarchy on late Anglo-Saxon Coins

The history of the Anglo-Saxon coinage starts at the end of Roman rule in Britain in the fifth century. The trade of the period was mainly based on barter, which was much more accessible to the ordinary peasant. In the early seventh century c.620 were issued the first Anglo-Saxon coins: the gold *thrysmas*. They are similar to Roman bronze coins and probably used only for trade with the Continent. The gold *thrysmas* are more influenced from earlier Roman coins than from other continental or eastern models and their imagery shows an increasing use of Christian symbols.⁸¹⁶

The *sceatta* is a small silver coin which equates to the gold shilling, the Byzantine and Merovingian *treimissis*, or one third of a gold *solidus*, with a value of 20 *sceattas*. *Sceattas* are mentioned for the first time in the Laws of King Æthelberht, c.600 and appear in various types and styles based on Roman or Germanic models.⁸¹⁷ In the late eighth century *sceattas* were minted by the archbishops of York in Northumbria.

The silver penny was introduced by King Heaberht of Kent in c.764 and dominated the coinage of the late Anglo-Saxon period up to the Norman Conquest in 1066. The silver penny shows Frankish influence and weighs approximately the same with the *sceatta* but it is larger and thinner. Influenced by late Roman and Merovingian models, the obverse of the silver penny has the title of the king and

⁸¹⁶ J. P. C. Kent, 'From Roman Britain to Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies Presented to Sir Frank Stenton*, ed. R. H. M. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 13.

⁸¹⁷ The *sceatta* was a small silver coin, which equated the gold shilling, the Byzantine and Merovingian *treimissis* or one third of a gold *solidus*, with a value of 20 *sceattas*. It appears in various types and styles based on Roman or Germanic models.

the reverse shows the name of the moneyer. The first pennies were minted at Canterbury and the name of the moneyer was Eoba. Moneyers had a quite high status in the Anglo-Saxon society as they were more financiers than actual craftsmen. Their names appear as witnesses to charters, some moneyers were lawmen, other things, and a lot were of burgess rank.⁸¹⁸

In the eighth century, under King Offa of Mercia, the obverse of the silver penny depicts, for the first time, a royal image having the bust facing to the right (fig. 172). Similarly to manuscript illumination the coinage of the period does not give a realistic representation of the Anglo-Saxon ruler. Silver pennies were also issued by the kings of East Anglia, the kings of Wessex, and the archbishops of Canterbury. In the ninth century the Viking rulers who invaded and settled in the British Isles issued silver pennies similar to those of the Anglo-Saxons.

What distinguishes the late Anglo-Saxon coins from earlier issues is the image of the Anglo-Saxon king on the obverse which suggests the king's strong presence in numismatic affairs. Late Anglo-Saxon kings, probably following Offa's example, became increasingly interested in taking control of mints and moneyers and issued severe laws against forgery. Not surprisingly as the Anglo-Saxon kings became stronger, the practice of archbishops issuing coins with their image on the obverse faded away. The iconography of the late Anglo-Saxon coinage reflects the political arena and the laws issued by the Anglo-Saxon rulers.

The Viking raids and the increasing power of ambitious earls, threatened the power of the Anglo-Saxon king who in order to protect the throne became law-maker, coin-issuer, and church-patron. As already mentioned, the consolidation of

⁸¹⁸ Lord Stewartby, 'Moneyers in the written records', in Mark A. S. Blackburn and David N. Dumville, eds, *Kings, Currency and Alliances: Southern England in the Ninth Century*, Studies in Anglo-Saxon History 9 (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 151-153.

late Anglo-Saxon kingship started with a firm royal control of the monetary system. From then onwards, in the coinage iconography the bust of the king features steadily on the obverse.

The obverse of the Anglo-Saxon silver pennies adopted the Roman bust in profile. Only the Archbishops of York and Canterbury (figs. 175-178), and later in the eleventh century King Edward the Confessor (fig. 201), struck a facing bust on the obverse. King Edward was the first Anglo-Saxon king to issue coins with a seated sovereign and to appear on the obverse with a beard (figs. 199-201). The iconography and the legends on the obverse and reverse of the silver pennies suggest that they intended to promulgate the glory of the king and Christianity. Distinctive differences between the imagery of the obverse and the reverse shows that each served a different aspect of royal propaganda.

Because of the uneven distribution of silver pennies in the late Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, certain issues appear only in a few areas while others enjoy a wider circulation. Hoards found outside the British Isles such as in Scandinavia and Rome give us valuable information about the trade and the diplomatic activity in the late Anglo-Saxon period. In Rome, near the site of the old papal palaces, was discovered a hoard of Anglo-Saxon silver pennies, c.947, with the imprint of King Edward the Elder and King Æthelstan. Because of *Danegeld*, the most commonly encountered Anglo-Saxon pennies are the ones issued by King Æthelred II and King Cnut.

Some of the silver pennies present an unusual iconography such as the issues with the *Agnus Dei* (fig. 192), *The Two Seated Emperors*, (fig. 179), the *Manus Dei* (figs. 188-190), and the *Sovereign/Martlets type* (fig. 200). The *Two Seated Emperors* is the only coin with a double portrait (fig. 179). The *Agnus Dei*, issued by King Æthelred, is the only attempt at a divine representation (fig. 192). The image

of Queen Cynethryth, on the obverse of a silver penny, marks the only female representation on Anglo-Saxon coinage (fig. 173).

In some of the issues, as in the case of the *Agnus Dei*—where the depicted figure on the obverse is that of the Lamb with the Cross rather than a king—the unusual imagery suggests commemorative overtones. The *Manus Dei* issued first by King Edward the Elder and later by King Æthelred II would remind people not only of the omnipotent presence of God but also of the harsh royal penalties against counterfeits. At Grately King Æthelstan decreed that forgers would have their hand cut and placed over their shop.

The strong presence of the cross in the iconography of the late Anglo-Saxon coinage also suggests the apotropaic power of coins as they were used, occasionally, as jewels and amulets.⁸¹⁹ The reverse dominated by the symbol of the cross with the promise of salvation forges a close relationship with the royal symbols on the obverse.

The iconography of the late Anglo-Saxon coinage does not depict standing or seated figures, coronation scenes, and double portraits. On the obverse, the Anglo-Saxon king appears without a beard. There were neither divine figures nor representations of queens or other important Anglo-Saxon women as the ones depicted on Roman and Byzantine issues (figs. 167, 168, 169, 206). The only exception to this is an issue depicting Queen Cynethryth with the bust facing right (fig. 173). Certain iconographic choices or omissions such as avoidance of female and divine representations form a distinctive Anglo-Saxon iconography in coinage not found in contemporary continental and Byzantine coins.

⁸¹⁹ Anna Gannon, *The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage: Sixth to Eighth Centuries* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 9, 29, 87-89 and 137-138.

Archbishops

In the late seventh century were issued coins bearing the titles of Anglo-Saxon kings and the archbishops of York.⁸²⁰ During the eighth and the ninth century, the archbishops of York and Canterbury continued issuing coins. Coins with the names of the Archbishops of Canterbury span from the reign of King Offa until the rule of King Edward the Elder. The desire of the Church for independence from secular society is expressed clearly Archbishop Wulfred's writings:

It is the king's right to appoint secular leaders, perfects and duces. It is the right of the metropolitan bishop to govern the churches, establish and consecrate the abbots, priests, deacons, and to encourage and admonish hem lest anyone of the sheep stray from the sheep of eternal shepherd.⁸²¹

The iconography on coins issued by archbishops reflects Wulfrerd's strong views, which would have hardly pleased any king. On the obverse the prelates are depicted in frontal bust, avoiding the Roman bust in profile or 'state' representation, and favouring an ecclesiastical, 'iconic' representation which was also preferred on the coinage of the Byzantine Emperors.⁸²² By contrast, the Anglo-

⁸²⁰ George Brooke, *English Coins: From the Seventh Century to the Present Day* (London, 1950), p. 10.

⁸²¹ See S 22/BCS 91.

⁸²² The archbishops introduced the facing bust on coins, much favoured in the Byzantine Empire, and an iconic representation of figures. On coins from the eastern empire there were frontal images of the Virgin Mary and after the iconoclasm several coins were issued with the facing bust of Christ. Emperors, empresses and members of the imperial family were all frontally represented.

Saxon kings, preferred the profile view alluding to the glory of the Roman emperors.

In the reign of King Eadberht (737-758), on the obverse of a Northumbrian *sceat* appears the name *ECGBERHT A* (or *AR*) *Abb.* and the name *EADBERHT* (in the reign of Eadberht). The archbishop is depicted seated in profile, mitred and holding two crosses. The reverse features and cross and the name *EOTBEREHTVS*. The symbol of the cross dominates the obverse and the reverse of the issues.

Typically on the obverse the bust of the archbishop is fully encircled (fig. 175). In some issues, the legend over the prelate's bust ends on his shoulders also serving as a very appropriate halo (figs. 176, 178). In both cases, the placing of a small cross in the middle of the legend divides it symmetrically giving the illusion of a *globus cruciger* (fig. 178). On the obverse of some coins the archbishops of York and Canterbury appear with facing bust and tonsured head which was introduced for the first time by Archbishop Wulfred (fig. 175, 176).

The prelate's tonsured head would not have been visually understood in a profile view. Interestingly enough, archbishops wearing a diadem are depicted in a profile view. In this case the preference for the frontal or profile representation seems to be dictated by the diadem or the tonsure. A diademed head is better seen in profile view while a tonsured head is better understood in frontal view.

The archbishops were never depicted wearing a crown on the obverse. The introduction of a diadem in the imagery of the archbishops suggests the increasing

There were also coronations scenes, such as, the coronation of the emperor by the Virgin Mary, and a lot of double portraits representing the imperial couple, or the emperor with his son. See Warwick Wroth, *Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum* (Argonaut, 1966); Philip Grierson, *Byzantine coins in the Dumbarton Oaks and Whittemore Collections* (1958), vol. 3, pt. 1.

power of the Church. The diadem and the *pendands* (pendulatum) on the ears of the archbishops also suggest influence from the Byzantine Emperors and the glorious past of the Romans. The adoption of royal and imperial iconographic details by archbishops implies their political ambitions.

Frequent disputes between archbishops and Anglo-Saxon kings during the ninth century, mostly over ecclesiastical property, implies that the Anglo-Saxon kings were concerned about the power the clergy. In the tenth century the archbishops stopped minting coins and that probably contributed to the gradual improvement to their relationship with the kings.⁸²³ For example, King Edgar was in close collaboration with Dunstan, Oswald and Ethelwold and his reign was closely related with the monastic reform. Archbishop Wulfstan was actively involved in the writing of the laws of Æthelred II and Cnut.

Coins issued by archbishops usually have the name of the king with whom they sided. There are also coins with only the name of the archbishop such as the ones issued by Archbishop of Canterbury Wulfred (805-832) which have only his name and the moneyer's on and not the name of the Mercian king, even though his moneyers were working under King Ceonwulf and the kings of Kent. Occasionally, an archbishop issues coins with different kings. The early coins of Æthelheard, Archbishop of Canterbury (793-805) have the name of King Offa on but the ones struck after 796 bear the name of King Coenwulf. Between his election in 791 and the year he received his pallium, in 793, Archbishop Æthelheard he struck coins with the title 'Pontifex' instead of 'Archiepiscopus'.

⁸²³ George C. Brooke, *English Coins: From the Seventh Century to the Present Day* (London, 1950), pp. 11-21.

Jaenberht, Archbishop of Canterbury, is the first ecclesiastic to have his name on the obverse of silver pennies and King Offa's on the reverse.⁸²⁴ Some issues have the name of the archbishop in three lines on the obverse, or just a star, a *cross potent* or *pommée*.⁸²⁵ Archbishop Jænberht attested five of King Offa's charters in the 760s and the 770s, but his relationship with King Offa and Queen Cynethryth was rather difficult.⁸²⁶ For example Queen Cynethryth, who became an abbess after the death of King Offa, did not reach any settlement over land at Cookham in Bregwine neither with Archbishop Bregwine, Jaenberht's predecessor, nor with Archbishop Jænberht.⁸²⁷

In the ninth century, the archbishops of Canterbury appeared on coins in frontal bust and regal imagery. The majestic iconography of the archbishops,

⁸²⁴ George C. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 19.

⁸²⁵ Archbishop of Canterbury Jaenberht (776-790). In the eighth century, the mint of Canterbury was used by the kings of Mercia, Kent and the archbishops of Canterbury.

In S 1430/BCS 256 at the opening of the charter is stated that 'a pontifical council was held in the famous place which is called Chelsea, under the presidency of archbishops Jaenberht and Hygeberht with king Offa mediating, with all his leading men'. Then in S 1257/BCS 241, Offa states, 'Now, therefore, I, Offa, by the grace of God King...have consented to and subscribed for the good of my soul the aforewritten privilege of the lands, which was granted...in the Synod at Brentford, Archbishop Jænberht sitting with me'; see Walter de G. Birch, ed. *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, 3 vols (London, 1885-99); See also S. P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography* (London, 1968).

⁸²⁶ S 104/ BCS 216, S 106/ BCS 201, S 107/BCS 221, S 108/BCS 208, S 140/BCS 207; Catherine R. E. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c. 650-850* (University of Cambridge, 1990), p. 216. Offa granted to Bishop of London Eadberht, and not to Jænberht, rights to issue coins. See C. E. Blunt, C. S. S. Lyon and B. H. I. H. Stewart, 'The coinage of Southern England, 796-840', *British Numismatic Journal*, vol. 32 (1963) pp. 30-43; Ian Stewart, 'The London Mint and the Coinage of Offa', in *Anglo-Saxon Monetary History* [ASMH]. Ed. M.A.S. Blackburn (Leicester, 1986), pp. 27-43. Grierson and Blackburn reject Stewart's suggestion that London was the mint of King Offa; see P. Grierson and M. Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage I. The Early Middle Ages, 5th-10th centuries* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 281 and at 292. See also D. Whitelock, *Some Anglo-Saxon Bishops of London* (London, 1975), p. 14.

⁸²⁷ Finally, Abbess Cynethryth managed to make an agreement over the disputed land with Archbishop Æthelheard, before the synod at Clafesho in 798. The agreement is recorded in S 1258 (BSC 291).

depicted with pendants below their ears, shows influence from the Byzantine emperors.⁸²⁸

The relationship between ecclesiastics and Anglo-Saxon kings still presented difficulties. As in the case of Archbishop Jænberht, the archbishops of Canterbury, Wulfred and Ceolnoth, continued having disputes with Anglo-Saxon kings over ecclesiastical property.

Archbishop Wulfred (805-832) was a very dynamic and active ecclesiastic with strong views interested in reforming the Church and protecting ecclesiastical property.⁸²⁹ On his coinage, Archbishop Wulfred introduced the tonsured image (figs. 175, 176). In some of the issues Wulfred is depicted with pendants [*pendulatum*] similar to those of the Byzantine emperors. The archbishop issued some coins without the name of the Mercian King Coenwulf (796-821). The omission of the royal name probably suggests the difficult relationship between the prelate and the king.

From 805 to 817, Archbishop Wulfred witnessed charters issued by King Coenwulf who bestowed on the archbishop several estates. In 815 Archbishop Wulfred travelled to Rome to receive Pope Leo's blessing.⁸³⁰ In 816 at the Synod at Chelsea, Wulfred disapproved King Ceonwulf's claim to the lordship of monasteries and the appointment of the heads of monastic houses. The conflict of archbishop and the king over ecclesiastical property soon involved Pope Pascal I

⁸²⁸ Archbishop of Canterbury Wulfred introduces a tonsured image.

⁸²⁹ Archbishop Wulfred prompted the clergy to accept a communal life based in the rule of Chrodegang of Metz; see Margaret Deanesly, 'The Familia at Christchurch' in *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Thomas Frederick Tout*, ed. A. G. Little and F. M. Powicke (Manchester, 1925), pp. 10-13. Wulfred held the ecclesiastical council of 816 at Chelsea, where he disapproved the secular lordship in the monastic life and supported the right of the bishops to elect the heads of the foundations. See Haddan and Stubbs, eds., *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, iii, 579-84.

⁸³⁰ ASC (A, C, D, E) 815 See Dorothy Whitelock, *EHD*, (London, 1955), p. 170.

and the Frankish. In 817 King Ceonwulf succeeded in removing Archbishop Wulfred from the episcopate for six years.⁸³¹ In 821, the reconciliation offered by King Ceonwulf to Archbishop Wulfred had harsh terms, including a high fine and the loss of property, but the archbishop had to accept them since the king had the support of the pope and the emperor.

Wulfred's successor was Ceolnoth, Archbishop of Canterbury (833-870). Archbishop Ceolnoth introduces a Chi-Rho monogram type on his coinage and also adopts the tonsured head on facing bust (fig. 178).⁸³² Likewise, Wigmund (837-854?), Archbishop of York, appears on the obverse of a gold solidus with a facing bust and tonsured head (fig. 177). Archbishop Ceolnoth introduces an innovative iconography. The archbishop is depicted on the obverse with frontal bust and profile diademed head and the reverse has the name of the moneyer in and between lunettes. During Ceolnoth episcopate tensions between the church and the kings over ecclesiastical property continued.⁸³³ His successor, Archbishop Æthelred (870-889) is also depicted on the obverse of issues in frontal bust with profile diademed head, and the title *ETHELRED or ETHERED ARCHIEPI*. Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury (890-914), was the last prelate to issue coins.

⁸³¹ A statement of Archbishop Wulfred written in 825 gives as the reason for the dispute King Ceonwulf claims over the see of Canterbury. See W. de G. Birch, ed., *Cartularium Saxonicum* (London, 1885-99), 384, ii 18.

⁸³² In the ASC under the year 870 reads: Archbishop Ceolnoth died and Ethered, Bishop of Witshire, was chosen Archbishop of Canterbury.

⁸³³ In 838 Archbishop Ceolnoth met the West Saxon Kings, Ecgbert and Æthelwulf and reached an agreement of friendship expressed from the kings' part with land at Malling restored to the church of Canterbury. In return Ceolnoth promised alliance to both kings and their successors and their heirs. See Catherine R. E. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c.650-c.850* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 237. In 844 an assembly at Canterbury gathered in order to solve a dispute over ecclesiastical property. In the assembly were Archbishop Ceolnoth, King Æthelwulf, his son Æthelstan, the bishop of Rochester, abbots and various nobles. See S 1439/BCS 445.

Queen Cynethryth

In the eighth and ninth century, the kingdom of Mercia dominated Anglo-Saxon England at the same time as the Carolingian dynasty emerged in France. The steady exchange of letters, gifts and embassies between the Mercian and Carolingian kingdoms during this period suggests a strong cross-Channel contact. The cultural exchange between the royal and ecclesiastical courts in England and Francia was particularly strong under the rule of King Offa of Mercia c.757-796 (fig. 172).⁸³⁴ Queen Cynethryth, Offa's wife, is the only queen ever depicted on an Anglo-Saxon coin. By contrast, coins with images of queens and other powerful royal women were common on the Roman and Byzantine coinage (figs. 167-169, 206).

Queen Cynethryth was a powerful woman in the kingdom of Mercia and she appeared in the witness lists of charters.⁸³⁵ Evidence suggests that the queen began witnessing charters after the birth of her son Ecgfrith. Her titles in the charters are 'queen', 'queen of Mercians' and in the 780s 'queen of Mercians by the grace of God'.⁸³⁶ Most likely, King Offa in order to secure Ecgfrith's succession to the throne, made 'his bedfellow' Cynethryth a queen.⁸³⁷ Pauline Stafford notes that coins were issued in Cynethryth's name to celebrate the anointing of her son, Ecgfrith.⁸³⁸

⁸³⁴ Joanna Story, 'Francia and the Mercian Supremacy', in *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia* (2003), pp. 169-170.

⁸³⁵ Pauline Stafford, 'Political Women in Mercia, Eighth to Early Tenth Centuries', in *Gender, Family and the Legitimation of Power: England from the ninth to early twelfth century* (Aldershot, 2006), p. 35.

⁸³⁶ See, for example, S 59 and 60—both with Ecgfrith—where she is queen of the Mercians. This title is not however confined to her appearances with him, see also e.g. S 120, and 121, in 780, S 116, 117 and 118.

⁸³⁷ Pauline Stafford, *Queens, Concubines, and Dowagers: The King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1983), p. 128.

⁸³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

The obverse of a silver penny struck c. 757-796 at the mint in Canterbury, in the kingdom Mercia, depicts the draped bust of Queen Cynethryth facing to the right (fig. 173). The name of the moneyer, Eoba, appears diagonally arranged, with the letters facing the queen.⁸³⁹ All coins of Cynethryth were issued with the same moneyer, *Eoba*, and in some of the coins, there is a Latin cross on the left side behind the queen.⁸⁴⁰ On the reverse, the inscription *Cynethryth Regina* is arranged around a central circle, formed of pellets, with the letter M, for Mercia, followed by a bar and pellets. A *patée* cross stands between the name and the title of the queen, over the circle. The placing of the cross over and almost in the middle of the legends gives the illusion a *globus cruciger*.

On both issues, Queen Cynethryth is depicted with an elaborate hair style where sinuous lines suggest curly hair. Although this is not a portrait of the queen, there is a tendency for a softer treatment of features, suggested by fuller lips, large almond eye in profile, curly hair, and round face and neck. The chain drapery of her gown is gathered on the left shoulder with a brooch.

The imperial overtones in the iconography of the coinage of King Offa and Queen Cynethryth show influence from the glorious Roman past and the Byzantine empire and reflect King Offa's imperial and dynastic aspirations. Cynethryth was considered the only non-Byzantine woman to be so honoured—alongside Angelberga, mid-ninth-century wife of Louis of Italy, and

⁸³⁹ Three pellets are hammered together behind her neck and three more before the moneyer's letter E. More pellets appear on the reverse in the inner circle and in between the letters of the queen's name and the inscription. Unfortunately, there is not enough evidence about the significance of the pellets and of the patterns they form. Anna Gannon, *The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage: Sixth to Eighth Centuries* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 40-41.

⁸⁴⁰ It is quite unusual that on the obverse, next to Cynethryth's face, features the moneyer's name instead of her own, which is placed on the reverse. Some of King Offa's coins Offa also bear the name of the moneyer Eoba on the obverse.

Emma, wife of the tenth-century Carolingian ruler Lothar—after the end of the Constantinian house in the West.⁸⁴¹ It has also been suggested that coins of the Byzantine Empress Irene, struck in the 780s, may have been an inspiration for the iconography of Cynethryth's coinage (fig. 206).⁸⁴² Issues of Empress Irene show her in frontal bust. By contrast, Cynethryth's bust is in profile a practice which shows the influence of Roman coins such as the fourth-century coinage of Empress Helena.⁸⁴³

Although no correspondence between Alcuin and Queen Cynethryth survives, Alcuin (735-804) in his letters to other noble Anglo-Saxon women refers to Cynethryth as *dispensatrix domus*, the 'controller of the household'.⁸⁴⁴ In the letter to the nun Hunðryoð, Alcuin asks the nun to speak to Queen Cynethryth on his behalf, suggesting that Hunðryoð had access to the Mercian court and to the queen. Alcuin adds that he would like to write a letter to Cynethryth 'if the King's business had permitted her to read it'. And, he continues, '[I]et her rest assured that I am as faithful to her ladyship as I can be'. In the letter, Alcuin refers also to Ecgfrith, the son of King Offa and Queen Cynethryth, reminding the nun Hunðryoð to 'be sure to greet my son Ecgfrith' son of King Offa.⁸⁴⁵ In another

⁸⁴¹ P. Grierson and M. Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 69, 195, 248, 279-80, 576-7, 580.

⁸⁴² Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage*, pp. 279-80.

⁸⁴³ Anna Gannon, *The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage*; Pauline Stafford, 'Political Women in Mercia, Eighth to Early Tenth Centuries', p. 40.

⁸⁴⁴ Alcuin from York, Northumbria, was according to Einhard's *Life of Charlemagne* the most learned man of the period. English scholar, ecclesiastic and poet, Alcuin at the invitation of Charlemagne, he became a leading scholar and teacher at the Carolingian court in the 780s and 790, and in 796 he became Abbot of Tours; *Dispensatrix domus*, the 'controller of the household', See Ep. 101, MGH Epp. IV, *Alcuin of York*, no. 41; Letters to Anglo-Saxon noble women: Ep. 15, 32, 36, 50, 62, 72, 79, 84, 102, 103, 105, 106, 154, 195, 204, 213, 214, 216, 228, 241, 279, 300, 309, MGH Epp. IV. See S. Allott, trans., *Alcuin of York: His Life and Letters* (York, 1974).

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Ep. 62, MGH Epp. IV; *Alcuin of York*, no. 36.

letter, Alcuin asks an unnamed nun to 'greet that dear lady in my name'.⁸⁴⁶ In a letter to Ecgrith, Alcuin advises him to be worthy of his noble parents and to learn of *pietas* from Cynethryth.⁸⁴⁷

Cynethryth, as other important women from Mercia, was involved in monastic foundations. Queen Cynetryth's and King Offa's names are included in a privilege granted by Pope Hadrian to the royal monasteries.⁸⁴⁸ Together with King Offa, Cynetryth founded, acquired, and granted monasteries dedicated to St Peter, which probably included Bedford, Bath, Westminster, Northampton, Peterborough and Bredon.⁸⁴⁹ In addition the queen had under her control the monasteries of Cookham and Bedford, which were given to her by King Offa.⁸⁵⁰

When King Offa died in 796, Cynethryth, as was customary for a royal widow, became abbess of the community at Cookham in Berkshire, which was close to Offa's burial place at Bedford. At the Synod of Clofesho in 798, Cynethryth, who was already an abbess, was named King Offa's heir and consequently the queen had control over monasteries and their land.⁸⁵¹ In the same year, Cynethryth defended successfully the possession of Cookham against the

⁸⁴⁶ S. Allott, trans., *Alcuin of York: His Life and Letters*, Ep. 103, MGH Epp. IV; *Alcuin of York*, no. 43.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Ep. 61, MGH Epp. IV; *Alcuin of York*, no. 35.

⁸⁴⁸ W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century*, pp. 29-31

⁸⁴⁹ W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century*, pp. 29-31; C. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, pp. 226, n. 93.

⁸⁵⁰ C. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, p. 251; Nicholas Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), p. 116; A. W. Haddan and Stubbs, eds., *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, vol. 3, p. 512; *EHD*, ed. D. Whitelock (1955) 1, no. 79.

⁸⁵¹ Pauline Stafford, 'Political Women in Mercia, Eighth to Early Tenth Centuries', p. 40-1.

claims of the archbishop of Canterbury and the dispute ended with her being granted another monastery.⁸⁵²

Two of Cynethryth's four daughters, Æthelburh and Ælflæd, witnessed a confirmation of a privilege, granted by Pope Leo III in 798 to the monastery of Glastonbury, as relatives of Abbess Cynethryth.⁸⁵³ In 789, Eadburh, Cynethryth's daughter, married Beorhtric of Wessex (786-802), and in 792 her other daughter, Ælfflaed, married Æthelred I of Northumbria. In the twelfth-century *Vitae Offarum Duorum* (The Lives of two Offas) written in St Albans, Cynethryth was portrayed as an evil queen who had brutally murdered the suitor of one of her four daughters King Æthelberht of East Anglia.⁸⁵⁴ By contrast, the eighth-century *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is favourable to Queen Cynethryth and blames King Offa for the murder.⁸⁵⁵

The Kings and their symbols

The Two Emperors

King Alfred of Wessex (849-899) issued five types of coins—the *Lunettes*, the *Geometric-Quatrofoil*, the *Cross-and-Lozenge* type, the *Two Emperors* and the *Two-Line* type of coin—which correspond to three stages of the king's monetary reform in the weight of the coins.⁸⁵⁶ The last three types were issued during the third and

⁸⁵² P. Stafford, 'Political Women in Mercia, Eighth to Early Tenth Centuries', p. 40. See also P. Stafford *Queens, Concubines, and Dowagers: The King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1983), p. 183.

⁸⁵³ Wilhelm Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946), p. 251.

⁸⁵⁴ Pauline Stafford, *Queens, Concubines, and Dowagers: The King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1983), pp. 16-17.

⁸⁵⁵ See, Michael Swanton, ed. and trans., *The Lives of two Offas*, (Credition, 2010).

⁸⁵⁶ Mark Blackburn, 'Mints, Burhs, and the Grately Code, cap. 14.2', in *Defence of Wessex*, eds. D. H. Hill and A. R. Rumble (Manchester, 1996), pp. 160-7; Two of the monetary reforms took place

last monetary reform. In an attempt to develop and reinforce the burghal system, King Alfred increased the number of mints.⁸⁵⁷

Both King Alfred of Wessex and King Ceolwulf II of Mercia (874-879) struck the *Two Emperors* and the *Cross-Lozenge* types and issued coins from the London mint (fig. 179). King Ceolwulf II and Halfdene, the Danish king of Northumbria, had issued coins with two emperors seated, holding the globe, with a Victory figure or an angel above their heads.⁸⁵⁸ King Alfred was probably the first of the three kings to reintroduce the iconography of the *Two Emperors* featured on coins of the fourth-century classical Rome.⁸⁵⁹

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* mentions the three contemporary kings, Alfred, Ceolwulf, and Halfdene, in their continuous fight for supremacy.⁸⁶⁰ The *Two*

between c. 875-890, see M. Blackburn, 'The London Mint in the Reign of Alfred', *Studies in Anglo-Saxon History* 9 (1998), p. 106.

⁸⁵⁷ The most important mints under King Alfred are the mints of London, Canterbury and Winchester. See, M. Blackburn, 'Mints, Burhs, and the Grately Code, cap. 14.2', pp. 160-7.

⁸⁵⁸ The *Two Emperors* design is based on the *Two Emperors* 'Victoria Augg' prototype, a Roman or early Byzantine type of a *solidus* and *tremissis*: on this, two seated emperors hold an orb between them, with a winged victory over their heads (fig. 171) See G. Brooke, *English Coins*, Pl. III, figs. 10-12; Another tremisses presents only the bust of the figures in a pyramidal composition and this type was used by Ceolwulf of Mercia. The same design is found on a coin of Valentinian II, from Milan, see Whitting, *The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons*, p. 30; It has also been suggested that the *Two Emperors* issue marks the coronation of Alfred and Queen Ealhswith. See Janet L. Nelson, '"A King across the Sea": Alfred in Continental Perspective', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 36: (1986) p. 60; Brooke stresses that the *Two Emperors* issue suggests King Alfred's familiarity with the Roman past and that he used the motif for propaganda purposes. See George Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 45.

⁸⁵⁹ The motif with the *Two Emperors* seated holding an orb between them with a winged Victory over their heads same is found on the reverse of coins issued from the time of Valentinian I (364-75) until Theodosius I (379-95); see Philip D. Whitting, 'The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. Michael R. H. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 30.

⁸⁶⁰ Earlier in 871, (when in 871) Alfred and his brother King Ethelred defeated the Viking army at Ashdown, one of the Viking leaders was Halfdene. See ASC 'In the same year [871] King Ethelred died and was succeeded by his brother Alfred. In 872 the Vikings went to London and the Mercians made peace with them. In 873 the Vikings went to Northumbria and again the Mercians made peace with them. In 874 the Vikings subdue Mercia deposing King Burhred and placing Ceolwulf, 'an unwise king's thane', to the throne. In the year 875 Halfdene led his army to

Emperors issue probably suggests some alliance between King Alfred and King Ceolwulf II, since both issued, almost simultaneously, this motif on the reverse of their silver pennies. Only on the *Two Emperors* issue is Alfred styled as *Rex Anglorum*.⁸⁶¹ The silver pennies issued by King Halfdene bear the *Two Emperors* on the obverse rather than on the reverse as in the issues minted by King Alfred and King Ceolwulf II.

Mark Blackburn does not relate the iconography of *Two Emperors* with any particular interpretation since this is the most common motif of Roman *solidi* found in Britain already copied on gold shillings of the the mid-seventh century. He notes, however, a renewed interest in Roman coin designs, probably motivated by the discovery of hoards.⁸⁶² Anna Gannon stresses that the Anglo-Saxon version of the *Two Emperors* differs from the Roman prototype and it may have served secular and religious propagandistic goals.⁸⁶³

Silver pennies with the *London Monogram* on the reverse and the royal image on the obverse were issued by King Alfred and struck at the mint of London probably in 866, after the rebuilding of London (figs. 180-182).⁸⁶⁴ Most of

Northumbria. In 876 Halfdene apportioned the lands there. In 877, King Alfred went into Mercia and gave some part of it to Ceolwulf. In 866, King Alfred 'repaired' London. ASC A. 901 'King Alfred died'.

⁸⁶¹ George C. Brooke, *English Coins* (London, 1950), p. 45.

⁸⁶² Mark Blackburn, 'The London Mint in the Reign of Alfred', in Mark A. S. Blackburn and David N. Dumville, eds, *Kings, Currency and Alliances: Southern England in the 9th Century*, Studies in Anglo-Saxon History 9 (Woodbridge, 1998), p. 113.

⁸⁶³ The image may also refer to ceremonies of baptism in the 660s. During this period it was common the baptism of a ruler under the sponsorship of another. Such ceremonies would have reinforced alliances between kings. See Anna Gannon in *The Iconography of Early Anglo-Saxon Coinage*, pp. 86-87.

⁸⁶⁴ Halfdene had issued also pennies with the London monogram (872-875) see G. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 47. Mark Blackburn places the issue of Alfred's London Monogram coins at c. 880, and suggests that they were struck in order to commemorate Alfred's resumption of control over the city after the death of Ceowulf of Mercia. See Mark Blackburn, 'The London Mint in the Reign of

them have only the monogram on the reverse and omit the moneyer's name. The *London Monogram* imitated Greek monograms, which were very popular in Byzantine art; the Ostrogoths and Lombards in Italy had also monograms on silver coins.

The obverse of one of the 'London Monogram' issues depicts the bust of King Alfred, facing to the right. On the reverse, the monogram of London, *LONDONIA*, is in the middle and, above and below, feature the title *Alfred Rex* and the name of the moneyer, *Tilewine*, who also struck coins of the *Two-Line* type.⁸⁶⁵ King Alfred's wears a cuirass which probably suggests his military success.⁸⁶⁶ The diadem on his head has two or three rows beads in the middle. The king, clean-shaven with short hair, has a diadem on his head. The king's raised head with his eyes turning upwards is reminiscent of King Edgar looking upwards in the prefatory miniature of the New Minster Charter.⁸⁶⁷ King Alfred's upwards gaze is also reminiscent of Roman coins depicting Constantine the Great with lifted eyes (fig. 181).

On the obverse, the lettering of the inscription is symmetrically arranged with four letters on the right and four on the left of the composition. The four letters on the right are followed by the letter X which, however, assumes the shape of a cross although the inscription begins without a cross. The first four letters of the king's name, *ALFR*, are diagonally arranged, at the back and the front of his

Alfred', in Mark A. S. Blackburn and David N. Dumville eds., *Kings, Currency, and Alliances: History and Coinage of Southern England in the ninth century* (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 106-125.

⁸⁶⁵ The moneyer Tilewine also struck coins of the *Two-Line* type.

⁸⁶⁶ George Brooke, *English Coins*, pl. v. The cuirassed drapery can also be traced on King Offa's coins.

⁸⁶⁷ King Alfred's upwards gaze recalls also Roman coins of Constantine the Great with lifted eye (fig. 166).

image. The last two letters, *ED*, are followed by his title, *REX*. The last letter of the title, *X*, alludes to the shape of the cross.

The Hand of Providence

The obverse of the coinage of Edward the Elder usually features the royal bust to the left, occasionally to the right, and the title *Eadward Rex*.⁸⁶⁸ A rare type has the *Hand of Providence* on the reverse between the letters of the moneyer's name. The *Manus Dei* (The Hand of God/ Hand of Providence) had appeared earlier on Roman issues. A Roman coin with the veiled bust of Constantine I (*DN CONSTANTINUS PF AVGG*) facing to the right has on the reverse the deified Constantine standing and driving *quadriga* with the *Manus Dei* (*S MANA*) appearing from above.⁸⁶⁹ Constantine, who had been baptised on his deathbed, was the last emperor to be deified. On Constantine's issue, pagan ideas such as the deification of the emperor are united with Christian symbolism, namely, the Hand of God.

Some coins bear floral designs. Edward's *Burgh* type silver pennies follow closely the *Providentiae Augg* issue of Constantine the Great.⁸⁷⁰ Similarly to King Alfred issues with the *Two Emperors*, the *Burgh* type suggests influence from a Roman original. Perhaps the choice had to do with the building of the burgs

⁸⁶⁸ George Brooke, *English Coins*, pp. 54-55, pl. xiv, p. 11.

⁸⁶⁹ The coin was struck by Constantine's successor Constantius II (Antioch, 337-340) to commemorate the Deification of the previous emperor. Constantine, who had been baptized on his deathbed, was the last emperor to be deified. On this coin, pagan ideas such as the deification of the emperor are united with Christian symbolism, namely, the Hand of God.

⁸⁷⁰ The '*Burgh*' type is very similar to *Providentia Augusti* coins. Constantine the Great and his sons used a city gate as an emblem for the restoration of Gallic cities see G. Brooke, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 49; J. P. C. Kent, R. H. M. Dolley, ed., 'From Roman Britain to Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies Presented to F. M. Stenton on the Occasion of his 80th Birthday* (London, 1961), p. 14.

against the Danes by King Edward and his sister Queen Æthelflaed.⁸⁷¹ The Roman gateway is a reminder of the Anglo-Saxon burg. There is another type of issue depicting a church which is probably the New Minster of Winchester started by King Alfred and finished by King Edward the Elder.⁸⁷²

The Pronged crown

The first depiction of an Anglo-Saxon king with a crown appears on the coinage of King Æthelstan (figs. 183, 184). On his early coins, the title of the king was *AETHELSTAN REX*. This title and related ones also appear in his charters. From 931 onwards Æthelstan introduces the crown on the obverse and the title *Rex Totius Britanniae* (King of all England).⁸⁷³ The title and the crown suggest Æthelstan's military achievements since England under King Æthelstan is for the first time united. Additionally, the use of the Byzantine title '*basileus*' in some of his coins—*Basileus Totius Britanniae*—might reflect imperial aspirations influenced by the image of the Byzantine emperor.⁸⁷⁴

At Grateley, King Æthelstan decreed the earliest surviving law related to the coinage.⁸⁷⁵ His monetary reforms at Grateley c. 925-935 expressed his aspiration to keep the coinage strictly under royal control. King Æthelstan also decreed in Grately that affairs of the borough, such as trade or minting, should come under the aegis of borough reeves, who had the duty to witness large scale

⁸⁷¹ For Queen Æthelflaed see Simon Keynes, 'Edward, King of the Anglo-Saxons', in N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill, eds., *Edward the Elder 899-924*, (London, 2001), pp. 51-54, 61-62.

⁸⁷² George Brooke, *English Coins*, pl. xiv, 3.

⁸⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁸⁷⁴ Philip Whitting, 'The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons' in *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies Presented to Sir Frank Stenton*, ed. Michael R. H. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 34.

⁸⁷⁵ George Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 56.

transactions.⁸⁷⁶ The king also ordered severe penalties for forgery such as the loss of the hand of the counterfeiter.

The obverse in one of the issues shows Æthelstan's crowned bust facing to the right (fig. 184). The crown expresses the sacred aspect of the kingship, the anointed king who rules under divine grace. The circular legend reaches the king's shoulders and reads *Aethelstan Rex*. The reverse has a small encircled cross in the middle, which is the same size as the cross in the obverse. The legend carries the name of the moneyer and the mint. King Æthelstan wears a cloak clasped with a brooch on his right shoulder. Horizontal and vertical lines indicate drapery. His clean-shaven face and square, robust neck show influence from Roman portraiture representing soldiers.

The same type of three-pronged crown is depicted in another crowned bust of King Æthelstan (fig. 183). Here Æthelstan's profile is more refined. His nose is straight, his eyes placed more in perspective, his hair has some texture and the shape of his neck is less bulging.

The obverse on an issue from York mint shows King Æthelstan wearing a helmet and the royal bust facing to the right.⁸⁷⁷ The helmet is reminiscent of Æthelstan's military achievements. Beginning with a small cross on the left, the legend bears the name of the king and the word *Totius*. There is not much space left between the image of the king and the legend. Similarly to other issues, the legend begins and ends at the shoulders of the king, giving the illusion of a halo.

⁸⁷⁶ Patrick C. Wormald, 'Legislation as Legal Text' in *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1999) vol. I, p. 294.

⁸⁷⁷ York came under the dominion of Æthelstan in 927 when Sihtric Gale, who had married Æthelstan's sister in 926, died. See Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 57, pl. xvi, 17.

As in the prefatory miniature of the *Vitae Sancto Cuthberti*, the king wears a cloak clasped with a brooch on his right shoulder.

The Mint

On his coinage, King Edgar appears with the title *EDGAR REX*, occasionally with the inscription *Anglorum* or *To Bri* (figs. 185, 186) King Edgar's coins show similarities with those of King Æthelstan. Both kings issued large coinage with fine workmanship and engaged a large number of mints and moneyers.⁸⁷⁸ King Edgar's coinage has five major types and its earliest portrait type has the bust to the right.⁸⁷⁹

On the obverse of the earlier portrait type, King Edgar is crowned with the bust to the right and the legend reads *Edgar Rex*. A small encircled cross features in the middle of the reverse surrounded by a circular legend, with or without the name of the mint. The most common issue is a 'non-portrait' type with the name of the moneyer on the reverse and with four main varieties of lettering, associated with different parts of England.⁸⁸⁰ Some of King Edgar's earlier coins show strong influence from the coinage of an earlier Anglo-Saxon period such as the *Halfpenny*

⁸⁷⁸ Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 26; The number of mints after King Edgar's reform is about seventy while before the reform is about twenty-five and thirty five. See Michael R. H. Dolley and D. M. Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. Michael R. H. Dolley.

(London, 1961), p. 147.

⁸⁷⁹ Types: 1) O: small cross R: name in two lines, crosses in between (sometimes rosettes and annulets) usually without the name of the mint 2) O: small cross R: floral design, Oswald 3) O: small cross R: flower above name 4) O: small cross or rosette in both sides, with and without name of the mint 5) O: bust to right R: small cross 6) small bust to left (cf. coins of Edward the Martyr) R: small cross. With the name of the mint.; For the earlier portrait type see Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, p. 140.

⁸⁸⁰ BMC type I; pl. xiii, 1-4; see Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar' p. 144 (BMC type I; pl. xiii, 1-4).

of London, which echoes the iconography of the coinage of his great-grandfather, King Alfred.⁸⁸¹

After Edgar's monetary reform in 973, the number of the mints increases from thirty-five to seventy, all issues bear the name of the mint, and recoinage takes place every six years.⁸⁸² On the obverse the royal bust faces left, and on the reverse King Edgar, following the practice of King Æthelstan, reintroduces the names of the mint and the moneyer.⁸⁸³

In the pursuit of centralized administration, Edgar prevented regional involvement in the monetary system by introducing a single currency circulating all over England, by centralizing the production of dies and, by replacing local administrators with royal ones.⁸⁸⁴ As Marion Archibold and Christopher Blunt suggest, 'Edgar seems to have applied to his reform the same tactic he used for his monastic reform: groups of people were replaced in favour of others who would be much more controllable by the royalty.'⁸⁸⁵

On the obverse of an issue, introduced after the monetary reform, the king is depicted with a diadem and the title of the legend reads *Edgar Rex Anglorum*

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 140, 156, pl. ixI, 7, 8, 18: King Alfred's coins; The halfpenny of London: pl. xiv, 16.

⁸⁸² BMC type VI, PL. XIII, 15. Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Edgar' p. 144; C. Karkov, 'Edgar and the Royal Women of the Monastic Reform' in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 103-4; For the interdependence between a mint and a borough, see Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', pp. 147-8.

⁸⁸³ In the thirteenth century, Roger of Wendover, a monk of St Albas, records the numismatic reform under King Edgar under in the year 975. See Henry O. Coxe, ed., Roger of Wendover, *Flores Historiarum* (London, 1841-4). 'Deinde per totam Angliam novam fieri praecepit monetam, quia vetus vitio tonsorum adeo erat corrupta, ut vix nummus obolum appenderet in statera'; Dolley and Metcalf agree that Edgar's reform took place in the late years of his reign but do not accept the year 975 see Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', pp. 136-168.

⁸⁸⁴ King Edgar developed King Æthelstan's idea for a single currency all over the kingdom; see P. Wormald, *The Making of the English Law* (Oxford, 1999), p. 315, II Eg 4-4: 3.

⁸⁸⁵ Archibold and Blunt, *Æthelstan to the Reform of Edgar, 924-c. 973*, p. 195.

(fig. 186). The bust, facing to the left, is entirely encircled, probably to give more space to the long royal title in the legend. King Edgar's hair is textured but shorter. The diadem with ribbons on his hair shows influence from the *Two Emperors* coin of King Alfred. In the middle of the reverse, there is a small encircled cross encircled by the legend with the name of the mint.

Edgar's plans to reform the coinage in 973 can be found in Edgar's Andover Code (II-III Edgar). Dolley and Metcalf suggest that Edgar's numismatic reform promoted the interdependence between a borough and a mint and created a strong network of mints. The numismatic reform facilitated people's approach to the mints since the king established recoinage every six years.⁸⁸⁶ It can also be suggested that regular recoinage was the actual reason behind the monetary reform as it helped King Edgar to control revenues all over his kingdom.⁸⁸⁷ Recoinage was also a source of further royal income since each time that the old coins were replaced by new ones, the moneyers paid the king for the new dies. The people also had to pay the moneyers fees in order to exchange their coins for the new ones.

The *Manus Dei* and the *Agnus Dei*

King Æthelred reigned over thirty-seven years and— based on Scandinavian hoards— he struck six substantive issues, among them, the *Manus Dei* and the *Agnus Dei* have the most innovative designs (figs. 188-190,192).⁸⁸⁸ On

⁸⁸⁶ Archibold and Blunt, *Æthelstan to the Reform of Edgar, 924-c. 973*, p. 152.

⁸⁸⁷ Christopher Blunt and Marion Archibold support that Edgar's coinage reform was an attempt to strengthen the royal control and to promote a centralised administration. See Christopher E. Blunt and Marion Archibold, 'Introduction', *Æthelstan to the Reform of Edgar, 924-c. 973* (London, 1986), p. xxii, and p. 195.

⁸⁸⁸ King Æthelred II (979-1016). The five types of King Æthelred's coinage: 1) *First Hand* type (A.D. 979); 2) *Second Hand* type (A.D. 986) reduction in weight in comparison to the *First Hand* issue; 3)

the obverse of his issues the king adopts the title *Aethelraed Rex*, with or without *Anglorum*.

King Æthelred's enormous coinage shows the wealth in England during the tenth century.⁸⁸⁹ Prosperity is also suggested by the increase in the number of mints which reach the number of seventy-five.⁸⁹⁰ Æthelred had to pay a large amount of money to restrain the Viking attacks. The king made six tribute payments and in 991 the *Danegeld* was paid on a national scale.⁸⁹¹ For this reason a lot of hoards with Æthelred's issues were found in Scandinavia.

In his monetary *Laws*, King Æthelred decrees that mints should operate only in a town, probably referring to mints operating secretly in forests.⁸⁹² Dolley points out that Æthelred's insistence in his *Laws* to have the issues struck only in a town 'could in itself be used as an argument that mints had been operating in places which were no towns, and had been doing so with the royal fiat implicit in the supply from a central source of the necessary dies'.⁸⁹³

Helmet type (A.D. 1003); 4) *Long Cross*; 5) *Agnus Dei* (Summer 1009); 6) *Last Small Cross* (1009); see H. R. Loyn, 'Boroughs and Mints, ad 900-1066' in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley (London, 1961), pp. 154-5; G. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 65; Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', p. 152. For the weight of King Æthelred's coins, see V. J. Butler, 'The Metrology of the Late Anglo-Saxon Penny', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, Michael Dolley (London, 1961), pp. 201-4.

⁸⁸⁹ George Brooke argues that the large size of King Æthelred coinage was related to the *Danegeld* paid mostly in coins. See G. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 65.

⁸⁹⁰ Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 65; After the reign of King Edgar, the coins always bear the name of the mint and the name of the moneyer; see Henry R. Loyn, 'Boroughs and Mints A.D. 900-1066', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 127.

⁸⁹¹ The six tribute payments reached the amount of 155,000 lbs of silver. See G. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 65.

⁸⁹² Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', p. 148: 'only in a town could in itself be used as an argument that mints had been operating in places which were no towns, and had been doing so with the royal fiat implicit in the supply from a central source of the necessary dies.'

⁸⁹³ Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Edgar', p. 148.

Usually in Æthelred's coins the royal bust faces to the left. In some issues the king is depicted wearing a radiate helmet and holding a sceptre. His gold coins following the pattern of the *radiate helmet* type shows the king's bust facing to the left. In the radiate helmet types, the bust on the obverse and the cross on the reverse are not encircled.⁸⁹⁴

The 980s were dominated by issues with the *Manus Dei* (Hand of Providence) on the reverse between the letters A and W, and with the royal bust facing to the right on the obverse (fig. 188).⁸⁹⁵ Byzantine, and especially Carolingian and Ottonian influence can be seen in the prominent *prependulia* of the king's crown, the exaggerated fibula of the *paudamentum* and the use of the *Manus Dei*.⁸⁹⁶ It should also be noted, that the *Manus Dei* was also part of the Byzantine iconography.⁸⁹⁷ Emperor John I Tzimiskes (969-976), well known for his piety and

⁸⁹⁴ The Radiate Helmet type shows similarities with the obverse of the double denarius with name of Maximian of the Lyons mint; see J. P. C. Kent 'From Roman Britain to Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. R. H. M. Dolley (London, 1961), pp. 1-22, pl. II figs. 19-20.

⁸⁹⁵ In the 980s, King Æthelred's mother, Ælfryth, is strong in the court and witnesses diplomas. But when Æthelwold dies, the minority of her son, King Æthelred, ends and the king is keen on taking real control. The end of King Æthelred's minority coincides with the *Second Hand* issue; see Keynes 1980, pp. 174-176.

⁸⁹⁶ Philip Whitting, 'The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons', *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies Presented to Sir Frank Stenton*, (London, 1961), pp. 34-5.

⁸⁹⁷ Constantine V, Copronymus (741-775) and in joint reign with his son Leo IV, the 'Khazar' from 751, issued coins with the *manus Dei* on the obverse see Warwick Wroth, *Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum* (Argonaut, 1966), p. 485, no 58, type 2: On the left the bust of Constantine V, bearded, facing and on the right smaller bust of Leo IV, beardless facing. Both wear crown with globus cruciger. A Small cross is depicted between their heads. Above appears the *manus Dei* blessing the Emperors. Basil II 'Boulgaroktonos' and his brother Constantine VII (joint reign from 976-1025) issue coins with the *Manus Dei* see Wroth, *Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum*, p.485, no 6: Facing busts of Basil II and Constantine VII. Above Basil II appears the *manus Dei*. In the eleventh century Michael IV, the Paphlagonian (1034-1041) issues coins with the *manus Dei* on the obverse see Wroth, *Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum*, p. 497, no 1: Facing bust, bearded, crown with cross, jeweled robe, in right hand holding labarum, in the left globus cruciger and above *manus Dei*. On the reverse: bust of Christ; Michael VI, Stratioticus (1056-1057) issues coins with the *manus Dei* on the obverse see Wroth, *Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum* bearded, standing facing, wearing a jeweled robe. They hold between them the labarum. The

support to monasticism, struck solidi with the obverse depicting the Virgin Mary in frontal bust crowing him and with the *Manus Dei* blessing him from above (fig. 208).⁸⁹⁸ A rare variety of King Æthelred's coinage shows the *Agnus Dei* facing to the right on the obverse and the *Dove* on the reverse (fig. 192). In case that the issue was struck as a *Millenium* coin, it can be dated to the year 1000.⁸⁹⁹

The Crown and the helmet

King Cnut reigned over nineteen years and struck three substantive issues.⁹⁰⁰ On the obverse the king adopts the title *Cnut Rex*, with or without *Anglorum*. The royal bust faces to the left, and on the reverse the cross becomes more elaborate (figs. 193-195).⁹⁰¹ Cnut introduces on the obverse the crown and the peaked helmet, as a reminder of his military achievements. On the first issue, the *Quatrofoil*, the crowned bust is depicted in quatrefoil and faces to the left.⁹⁰² The

manus Dei appears on the right crowning the Emperor. On the reverse Christ, bearded, seated facing on throne, wearing plain nimbus.

⁸⁹⁸ The silver solidus was probably struck in 972 in commemoration of the emperor's victory in Bulgaria. During the celebration in Constantinople the icon of the Theotokos, which had been in the enemy's hands during the war, was on display. The depiction of the Virgin on the solidus probably refers to this occasion. See Warwich Wroth, 'Introduction', in *Imperial Byzantine Coins* (Ili), pl. liv, 14; The emperor, John I Tzimisces, is depicted frontally, bearded, wearing a crown with the cross and a robe with square patterns. He holds a patriarchal cross. On the reverse, appears the frontal bust of Christ bearded, with the right hand in benediction and the left holding the book of Gospels. During the reign of John I Tzimisces, with the marriage of the Byzantine Princess Theophano to Otto II, son of the Emperor Otto, in 972, the relations between the Byzantine Empire and the West were closer than ever.

⁸⁹⁹ George Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 65; For *Agnus Dei* being struck in the summer of 1009, see Michael R. H. Dolley, 'The Shaftesbury Hoard of Pence of Æthelred II', *Numismatic Chronicle* 16 (1956), p. 267; Peter Seaby, 'The Sequence of Anglo-Saxon Coin Types, 1030-1050', *BNJ* : 28 (1) (1955), pp. 127-9.

⁹⁰⁰ Michael R. H. Dolley, *Anglo-Saxon Coins* (London, 1961), p. 152; Dolley and Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley, (London, 1961), pp. 136-68; King Cnut (1016-1035).

⁹⁰¹ George Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 69.

⁹⁰² For the weight of King Æthelstan coinage, see V. J. Butler 'The Metrology of the Late Anglo-Saxon Penny', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. R. H. M. Dolley (London, 1961) p. 210-11.

king's crown is similar to that in the prefatory miniature picture in the New Minster *Liber Vitae*. On the second issue Cnut is depicted with the characteristic helmet worn by Anglo-Saxons, Normans and Vikings in the eleventh century (fig. 193). Some issues have a longer more detailed bust with the depiction of arm, hand, and sceptre, and on the reverse the cross on four jewels.

Other issues have the bust to the right, together with the added sceptre, and on the reverse a cross is depicted in voided quatrefoil frame (fig. 195).⁹⁰³ Here a striking similarity lies between the legend starting with a cross, followed by the title of the king and the prefatory miniature of the *Liber Vitae*, where the king's name appears next to the enormous golden cross.

PACX and Facing Bust

King Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) was consecrated king by Archbishop Eadsine at Winchester, on Easter Day, the third of April, in 1043.⁹⁰⁴ A poem in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* mentions that all men yielded allegiance to King Edward 'the noble, the ruler of heroes, the distributor of riches.'⁹⁰⁵ In the *Vita Ædwardi Regis*, Edward is portrayed as 'a proper figure of a man, a very royal person'.⁹⁰⁶ The *Vita Ædwardi Regis* also tells us that the king was very popular among his people: 'King Edward's dead body was washed by his country's tears.'⁹⁰⁷ Another account in the *Vita Edwardi* gives the portrait of the king as an old man—a dignified man of great majesty. According to his biographer, King

⁹⁰³ Some coins follow the Æthelred's types, n.1 and 5, with bust to the left. There is one issue with long bust to left with sceptre (pl. xvi 14). Another type bears long bust to the left with hand holding sceptre (pl. xvi 15). The issue with bust to left without sceptre has on the reverse a long cross voided with trefoil or fleurs (pl. xvi 16).

⁹⁰⁴ *The ASC*, A. 1043.

⁹⁰⁵ *ASC s.a.*, 1066.

⁹⁰⁶ Frank Barlow, ed. and trans., *Vita Ædwardi Regis: The Life of King Edward* (London, 1962), pp. 9 and 12. The *Vita Edwardi Regis* was commissioned by Queen Edith shortly before King Edward's death.

⁹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

Edward was exceptionally 'tall, well made, an unblemished royal figure, with milky white hair and beard, round pink face, and thin white hands, the fingers so emaciated as to be translucent.'⁹⁰⁸

Images of King Edward appear on coins (figs. 197-202), drawings of his seal (fig. 196), and the Bayeux Tapestry (figs. 55, 57, 59). There is a likely depiction of Edward as a young prince next to his brother Alfred in the prefatory miniature of the *Encomium Regina Emmae* (BL, MS Additional 33241, fol. 1v; fig. 36). Edward is probably the one drawn smaller, with short hair, cut in front in a fringe, short, curly beard and a neat moustache. Edward's depiction in the Bayeux Tapestry, as an old and wise biblical figure, suggests influence from manuscript illumination.⁹⁰⁹ Wormald notes that King Edward's figure in the Bayeux Tapestry resembles that of King David in a psalter, made c.1050 (BL, Cotton MS Tiberius C.vi. fol. 30).⁹¹⁰

King Edward was not known as a great warrior and there is no evidence that he wrote any laws. However, the king was well known for his piety. As King Cnut and Queen Emma, King Edward and Queen Edith were avid collectors of relics. One of King Edward's constant concerns during his reign was the rising power and intrigues of the Godwine family. King Edward appears strong and almost imperial on his coinage but there is a suspicion that his impressive coinage covered a rather weak rule. In vernacular writ-charters, King Edward is described simply as *cing*.⁹¹¹ On his seal, which authenticated the writ, his title is *Anglorum Basileus* (King of the English).⁹¹² Catherine Karkov notes the difference between the

⁹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-19.

⁹⁰⁹ Frank Stenton, *The Bayeux Tapestry* Phaidon (Phaidon, 1957), p. 31, fig. 11.

⁹¹⁰ See Elzbieta Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, pp. 115-17, no. 98.

⁹¹¹ Frank Barlow, *Life of King Edward* (London, 1962), pp. xxv-xxvi.

⁹¹² Florence E. Harmer, *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, pl. 2; Only the second seal of Edward is genuine. See Bishop and Chaplais, eds., *Facsimiles of English Facsimiles of English royal writs to A.D. 1100. Presented to Vivian Hunter Galbraith Writs* (Oxford, 1957), p. xxii.

rather humble image of King Edward in the *Vita Edwardi*, 'Edward never appears wielding a sword, staff or orb of power', and the majestic appearance on his coinage.⁹¹³

Edward's coinage shows an eclectic character and innovative design. Under his rule the silver penny was still the standard coin.⁹¹⁴ Some gold coins, the *mancus*, were struck from the ordinary dies perhaps for commemorative purposes or for special gifts.⁹¹⁵ The eleven distinct types of King Edward coins were issued in a span of twenty-four years, which means that the intervals between the changes of types were the shortest in the Anglo-Saxon period.⁹¹⁶ Since King Edgar's monetary reform recoinage was taking place on average about every six years. Henry Loyn suggests that the simplest explanation for the frequent change of issue in Edward's reign was the increase in the royal revenue as the moneyers had to pay the king for the new dies.⁹¹⁷ The change of the coinage was also related

⁹¹³ See C. Karkov, 'Edward, the Godwines and the end of Anglo-Saxon England' in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, (Woodbridge, 2004), p. 163.

⁹¹⁴ There may have been minted a few half pennies as well. See C. S. S. Lyon, 'A Round Halfpenny of Edward the Confessor', *BNJ* 34 (1965), pp. 42-5.

⁹¹⁵ One struck in at Warwick c.1051, is illustrated in the frontispiece to Michael R. H. Dolley, *Anglo-Saxon Pennies* (London, 1964). The *mancus* probably worthed thirty pences.

⁹¹⁶ King Edward's types of coins: 1. O: Bust to the left with sceptre/R: Quadrilateral over cross voided. 2. O: Radiate bust to left/ R: Small cross. 3. O: Bust to left/ R: Cross voided (very small flans). 4. O: Bust to left with sceptre/ R: PACX in angles of voided cross. 5. O: Bust to left with sceptre/ R: Expanding Cross. 6. O: Bust to right with peaked helmet and sceptre/ R: Cross voided with crescent ends. 7. O: King enthroned/ R: Cross voided and martlets. 8. O: Crowned bust to right with sceptre/ R: Cross voided with hammer ends. 9. O: Crowned bust facing/ R: Small cross. 10. O: Crowned head to right with sceptre/ R: Cross voided and Pyramids; The order of the eleven types of King Edward's coins is now firmly established. See ⁹¹⁶ Peter Seaby, 'The sequence of Anglo-Saxon Coin Types, 1030-50', *BNJ* 28 (1958), pp. 111-46; Michael, R. Dolley, 'New Light on the Order of the Early Issues of Edward the Confessor', *BNJ* 24 (1960), pp. 289-92.

⁹¹⁷ H. R. Loyn, 'Boroughs and Mints', in M. Dolley, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Coins* (London, 1984), p. 125.

to the change of the weight of the issues, as often happened during King Edward's reign.⁹¹⁸

King Edward appears on his earlier coinage with the title *EDWARD* or *EDWERD REX*.⁹¹⁹ In the first half of his reign, the image of the King Edward follows the standard coin imagery in England since the late tenth century, which derived from Roman models. On the obverse, King Edward appears in the traditional bust, clean-shaved, wearing a crown or diadem and facing left. Some of the issues imitate certain Roman imperial types. For example, the *Radiate Bust* was used by Roman emperors in the third century. Moreover, in Edward's *Sceatta* show influence from series the Roman *Virtus Exercit* design (the 'Standard' from Constantine the Great).⁹²⁰

In the second half of his reign, Edward's title on the obverse is *EDWERD REX*; later Edward uses mostly on the obverse the title *EADWARD REX ANGLORUM*, or abbreviations of this. In 1042-44, on the reverse of his silver pennies appears, for the first time, the word *PACX*, in the four quadrants of the cross (fig. 197).⁹²¹ The arrangement of the letters, *PACX*, bears similarities with the *CRUX* issue of King Edward's father, King Æthelred II. Catherine Karkov notes

⁹¹⁸ Table in Grierson see Philip Grierson, 'Sterling', in *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles: Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge*, pt. 1, *Ancient British and Anglo-Saxon Coins* (London, 1958), p. 273. Edward's issues were mostly of 18 grains, once falling to 17. But in the middle of the reign, possibly in 1051, the weight was increased spectacularly to 27 grains. In 1053 if we accept one scheme of dating it was reduced to 21.5, and then it see-sawed: 20.5 in 1056, 21.5 in 1059, 17 (the lowest point) in 1062, and back again to 21.5 for Edward's last issue in 1065. It was at this weight that William held the coinage until 1080, when it was advanced to 22.5. The government was carrying out a monetary policy which alternated between inflation and deflation. Perhaps the weight was changed simply in order to control the number of coins in circulation.

⁹¹⁹ King Edward the Confessor (1042-1066). See G. Brooke, *English Coins*, (pl. xvii).

⁹²⁰ Philip D. Whitting, 'The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. Michael Dolley (London, 1961), p. 26.

⁹²¹ The word *PACX* reappeared on the coinage of King Harold II, King William I, King Henry I. Brooke suggests some political significance see G. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 67.

that the message of peace *PACX* on the issues 'might also have been intended to express a wish for a return to the quitter days before the Danish conquest of 1016, as well as an end to current political rivalries'.⁹²² The message of peace is probably also related to the presence of birds on the reverse of the later '*Sovereign/Martlets*' issue (1056?), which in this case should be interpreted as doves (fig. 199). Doves reiterate the message of peace and also suggest the pious and 'dovelike' nature of King Edward.

After some change in the weight, the last five issues of King Edward's coinage show much more variety. The new style in coinage, which started possibly in 1053, reuses old traditional imagery in a more adventurous and imaginative way.⁹²³ The artist turns the royal bust to the right, introduces a beard, and substitutes the helmet for a crown (fig. 200). King Cnut had already been depicted on his coinage with a pointed helmet (fig. 198). And both Cnut King and King Harold Harefoot are depicted on issues holding a *fleur-de-lis* sceptre (figs. 195, 203). King Edward reiterates the same iconography in his the *Pointed Helmet* type, where he appears holding a *fleur-de-lis* sceptre (fig. 202).⁹²⁴

King Edward's new style in coins is characterised by a more naturalistic and vigorous approach to the royal image. Similarities between the 'naturalistic' bearded coinage of King Edward and certain contemporary Germanic coins can be

⁹²² Catherine Karkov, 'Edward, the Godwines and the End of Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, pp. 157-173.

⁹²³ Frank Barlow, 'Two Notes: Cnut's Second Pilgrimage and Queen Emma's Disgrace in 1043', *English Historical Review* (1958), p. 655; *VEdR*, ed. F. Barlow, p. 1xxvii; R. H. M. Dolley, and F. Elmore Jones, 'Some Remarks on BMC Type VII var. B of Edward the Confessor', *Numismatic Chronicle* 20, 6th ser., (1960), pp. 183-90.

⁹²⁴ Catherine Karkov relates the introduction of the *Pointed Helmet* type with important events that had taken place in the life of King Edward, such as the death of his mother in 1052, political intrigues with the Godwines and the assassination of Rhydderch in 1053 see Catherine Karkov, 'Ælfgifu/Emma and Cnut' in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 153.

explained by the presence of the German goldsmith Theodoric in the court of the king.⁹²⁵

In 1056, King Edward introduced his ninth type of coinage, the 'Sovereign/Martlets', with a frontal royal image on the obverse and four *martlets* on the reverse and slightly reduced weight (fig. 199).⁹²⁶ On the obverse, the depiction of King Edward enthroned in majesty holding a bird-tipped sceptre and a sword suggests Roman influence.⁹²⁷ The bird on the sceptre as a dove has been identified as a dove, which is a common illustration in later medieval regalia.⁹²⁸ Birch refers to it simply as a bird.⁹²⁹ The seated figure of the king also shows influence from the on *Two Emperors* coin issued by King Alfred and King Ceolwulf II.

The prototype of the obverse of the *Sovereign/Martlets* type is adapted from the reverse of a sixth-century Roman coin, a Constantinople solidus of Justin II, where the personification of Constantinople holds a spear in her right arm and her

⁹²⁵ See Pauline Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in eleventh century England* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 115-16; Frank Barlow, ed. and trans., *The Life of King Edward the Confessor who rests at Westminster* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 184-185.

⁹²⁶ The date is Milchaemas 1056 see M. Dolley and F. E. Jones 'A New Suggestion Concerning the So-Called "Martlets" in the "Arms of St Edward"' in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 216; During this period all pennies were struck in the knowledge that halfpennies and farthings could be supplied only by cutting the pennies into halves and quarters, and in fact all the substantive types struck between 991 and 1065, twenty of them, have a reverse type which is perfectly symmetrical and singularly adapted to division into four.

⁹²⁷ Roman imperial issues had Rome and Constantinopolis designs featuring the personification of the city, with a helmet and seated on the prow of a ship, holding a scepter in the right hand and an orb in the left. In the fourth century Theodosius I and Theodosius II produced similar designs on *solidi* and on bronze issues. Later in the sixth century Justin II used the same design on the reverse of his *solidi* see Philip Whitting 'The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons', p. 35, pl. III: 13-15.

⁹²⁸ M. Dolley and F. E. Jones, 'A New Suggestion Concerning the So-Called "Martlets" in the "Arms of St Edward"', p. 220.

⁹²⁹ Walter de Gray Birch, ed., *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1887), pt. 1, p. 2, no 5.

foot is set on the prow of a ship.⁹³⁰ In the *Sovereign/Martlets* type the turreted crown of Constantinople has been remodelled to resemble the open, foliate crown seen in the prefatory miniatures of King Edgar and King Cnut.

On the reverse of the *Sovereign/Martlets* type, the mysterious *martlets* are depicted between the arms of the cross—possibly doves rather than eagles.⁹³¹ Dolley and Jones interpret them as eagles in accordance to Roman-Byzantine traditions.⁹³² The Byzantine eagle-headed sceptre is depicted on early eighth-century coins of Emperor Philippicus and in Arab-Byzantine coins.⁹³³ The eagle, symbol of imperial power, is also associated with Roman iconography; Honorius had issued a *solidus* in Milan.⁹³⁴ In addition, the oldest existing pieces of English regalia include an *ampulla* of eagle form.⁹³⁵

The mysterious birds have also been associated with ravens, which featured on the English battle standard of the period.⁹³⁶ In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, the account of the Viking presence at Devon in 878 refers to the capture of the English

⁹³⁰ See Dolley and Jones, 'A New Suggestion Concerning the so-called 'Martlets' in the Arms of St Edward', p. 215; The reverse of the Constantinople Solidus of Justin II in pl. xvi. See Dolley and Jones, *Anglo-Saxon Coins* (London, 1961), p. 35, pl. iii, 13-15.

⁹³¹ Dolley and Jones argue in favour of eagles. See Dolley and Jones, 'Concerning the so-called 'Martlets' in the Arms of St Edward' (London, 1961), pp. 215-26. For doves (symbolizing perhaps the Holy Ghost), see Percy Ernst Schramm, *Sphaira, Globus, Reichsapfel; Wandring und Wandlung eines Herrschaftszeichens von Caesar bis zu Elisabeth II* (Stuttgart, 1958), pp. 117-18, pl. 32. The reverse with the 'martlets' between the arms of the cross provided medieval heralds with Edward's coat of arms.

⁹³² Michael Dolley and Elmore Jones, 'A New Suggestion Concerning the so-called 'Martlets' in the Arms of St Edward', in Michael Dolley, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Coins* (London, 1961), p. 224.

⁹³³ Michael Dolley and Elmore Jones, 'A New Suggestion Concerning the so-called 'Martlets' in the Arms of St Edward' (pl. xv, 2) p. 221. We find German and also Byzantine eagle-headed sceptres, e.g. the eighth century coin of Emperor Philippicus (pl. xv, fig. 2). Another eagle-sceptre appears on a Milan solidus of Honorius (pl. xv, 3) which indicates imperial connotations.

⁹³⁴ Michael Dolley and Elmore Jones, 'A New Suggestion concerning the so-called 'Martlets' in the Arms of St Edward', pl. xv 3.

⁹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

⁹³⁶ H. C. Curwen, 'Some Notes on a Penny of Edward the Confessor', *The Coat of Arms* 5:38 (1959), pp. 184 ff.

Raven-banner.⁹³⁷ Following on from that, the birds have been interpreted as *martlets*. The feet of the birds on the coins have feet recalling St Edward arms. In the arms, the birds may have been intended to be interpreted as doves, probably referring to King Edward's 'dovelike character.'

Harmer has discussed the coins in relation to the Great Seal of King Edward, the earliest surviving English seal, which in both sides depicts the king enthroned much like on his coinage (fig. 196).⁹³⁸ Hammer has also pointed out the relationship between the Great Seal of King Edward the Confessor, and those of the German emperors such as the Great Seal of Henry IV.⁹³⁹ Michael Dolley and Elmore Jones compare the Great Seal of Edward the Confessor with the Great Seal of Henry IV (fig. 196).⁹⁴⁰ Birch has interpreted the bird on the sceptre on the seal of Henry IV as an eagle.⁹⁴¹

On the one side of his seal, King Edward, enthroned, holds his sword in his left hand and a sceptre, surmounted probably by a bird. On the other side, the enthroned king holds a *fleur-de-lis* sceptre and an orb with a cross on the top. The legend reads: + *SIGILLUM EADWARDI ANGLORUM BASILEI*. Catherine Karkov suggests that Edward's double sided seal, which shows direct influence from the two-sided *bullae* of the Pope and the Byzantine emperors, and the orb mounted by a cross, which often features in Ottoonian art, show King Edward's eclectic iconography has imperial overtones.⁹⁴²

⁹³⁷ ASC (B, C, D, E) 878. Dorothy Whitelock ed., *EHD* (London, 1955), p. 180, no 6.

⁹³⁸ Florence Harmer, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Writs* (Manchester, 1952), p. 96, xvc and p. 103, pl. xvb

⁹³⁹ Florence E. Harmer *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, p. 96, pl. xv, c.

⁹⁴⁰ For the Great Seal of Henry IV see Florence E. Harmer *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, pl. xv.

⁹⁴¹ Dolley and Jones, 'Concerning the so-called "Martlets" in the "Arms of St Edward"', p. 221.

⁹⁴² For the discussion of King Edward's seal and the lost seal of King Cnut; see C. Karkov, *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 159 and p. 135.

In 1059 King Edward's coinage returned to a greater weight with the bust facing right and crowned this time.⁹⁴³ Catherine Karkov has suggested that the arched crown on King Edward's and King Harold Godwineson coinage perhaps had its origin in King Cnut's reign.⁹⁴⁴ In 1062 King Edward introduced the lightest issue, since the very beginning of his reign, with a very unusual design in Anglo-Saxon coinage: a facing, bearded and crowned bust on the obverse (fig. 201).⁹⁴⁵

The Roman origin of the *Facing Bust* type shows influence from the *solidi* of Constans II (641-68) and the *Fel. Temp. Reparatio* issue; a variety of this issue has a Roman 'Victory'.⁹⁴⁶ From the sixth to the eleventh centuries the *Facing Bust* is also prominent in Byzantine coins.⁹⁴⁷ By contrast, the *Facing Bust* had never been used by the Anglo-Saxons kings before King Edward.

⁹⁴³ His ninth type bears for the first time a facing bust. See G. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 68.

⁹⁴⁴ C. Karkov, 'Ælfifu/Emma and Cnut' in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 138 stresses King Edward's love for luxurious garments and precious stones (see *Vita Edwardi*) and the fact that the king had commissioned Spearhæfoc, bishop of London, to make a new crown for him. See also Frank Barlow, *The Life of King Edward* (Oxford, 1970), p. 159.

⁹⁴⁵ For the possible Ottonian origin of the design, see Philip D. Whitting, 'The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Studies Presented to Sir Frank Stenton*, ed. Michael R. H. Dolley (London, 1961), p. 35; M. Dolley, *Anglo-Saxon Pennies* (London, 1964), p. 29. The coinage of the Ottonian rulers, Henry II, Conrad II and Henry III probably was the main influence for the 'Facing Bust' issue see C. Karkov, 'Edward, the Godwines and the end of Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Ruler Portraits of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 158; Finally, in 1065, when the 21.5 grain standard was restored, the bust on the coinage of King Edward also turned to the right; His ninth type bears for the first time a facing bust see G. Brooke, *English Coins*, p. 68; J. P. C. Kent, 'From Roman Britain to Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley (London, 1961) p. 12; pl. I, 20-3 and pl. II, 1-5.

⁹⁴⁶ J. P. C. Kent, 'From Roman Britain to Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley (London, 1961) p. 12; pl. I, 20-3 and pl. II, 1-5.

⁹⁴⁷ P. Whitting 'The Byzantine Empire and the Coinage of the Anglo-Saxons', in *Anglo-Saxon Coins*, ed. M. Dolley, p. 34.

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